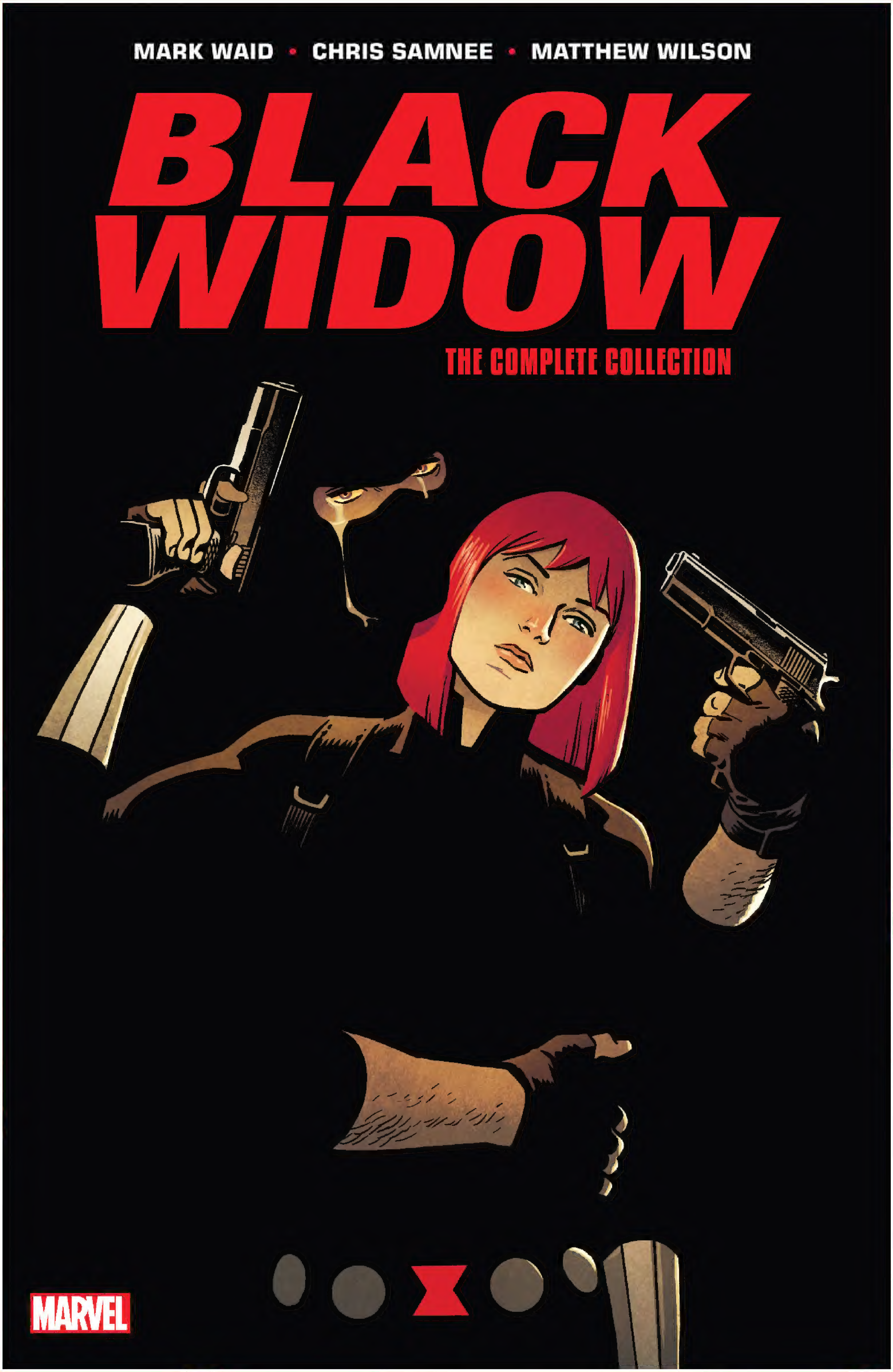
BLACK WIDOW

"BLACK WIDOW IS A CINEMATIC FEAST FOR THE EYES FEATURING A TANTALIZING MYSTERY WELL WORTH UNTANGLING."
– AIPT

KELLY THOMPSON
ELENA CASAGRANDE
RAFAEL DE LATORRE
RAFAEL PIMENTEL

MARVEL COLLECTED EDITIONS


MARK WAID • CHRIS SAMNEE • MATTHEW WILSON
BLACK WIDOW
THE COMPLETE COLLECTION
MARVEL

Black Widow by Waid & Samnee: The Complete Collection
ISBN 978-1-302-92129-3

AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD!

BLACK WIDOW

BY KELLY THOMPSON

Trained to be the world's greatest spy from childhood, Natasha Romanoff is an ex-KGB assassin, an ex-agent of S.H.I.E.L.D., and a sometimes Avenger. Throughout a long life of very little love and a lot of hate, the Widow has never known peace. **Until now.**

BLACK WIDOW

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BLACK
WIDOW
ONE

MANHATTAN.
NEARLY THERE.
NO WETWORKS, BLACK WIDOW. I NEED IT CLEAN.
NO PROBLEM.
DING
POWER CUT...

...NOW.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
SHHHFTTT
SMACK
SQUICK
RIPPPPPP
SLAM
WHAP
FZZZZZZT
I'M HERE. BLOW IT.
BOOM
SHHHWUMP

NOW, IF I WAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT, WHERE WOULD I BE?
SUBTLE.
TIK
TIK
TIK
BOOM
EMBARRASSINGLY EASY. AT LEAST I HAVE TIME TO GO BACK FOR MY BOOTS.

HAWKEYE. READY FOR MY EXIT.
THUNK
GUESS CLINT'S STILL A LITTLE PISSED AT ME.
DIDN'T REALIZE LEAVING HIM OUT OF THOSE MISSIONS WITH BUCKY WOULD MAKE HIM SO SALTY.
OR PERHAPS IT WAS BECAUSE I CALLED HIM SOFT?
EITHER WAY, I SHOULD MAKE THINGS RIGHT WITH HIM. LIFE'S TOO SHORT.

WHERE'S CLINT?
HE, *UH,* HAD TO GO.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO COVER FOR HIM, CAP. HE'S A LITTLE IRRITATED WITH ME. IT'S FINE. WE'LL WORK IT OUT, WE ALWAYS DO.
WHAT'S ON THIS DRIVE ANYWAY?
NOT SURE. I GOT A HEADS UP FROM AN OLD SOURCE... I SUPPOSE IN TIME WE'LL SEE IF THERE'S ANY MERIT TO IT.
SORRY I HAD TO SEND YOU IN ALONE, BUT NOBODY "LEAVES NO TRACE" LIKE YOU.
REGARDLESS, I APPRECIATE THE LAST-MINUTE CLOAK AND DAGGER.
PLEASE, THAT'S MY FAVORITE KIND.
ALMOST FELT LIKE OLD TIMES.
IT DID INDEED.
I'D SAY THE GOOD OL' DAYS, BUT WHEN WERE THOSE, REALLY?
I DON'T KNOW, I CAN REMEMBER SOME.
SURE YOU CAN, STEVE. CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON YOU FOR THAT.
HEH. YOU NEED A RIDE...
...BACK?
I HATE IT WHEN SHE DOES THAT.
HE LOVES IT.

HOME AGAIN, HOME AGAIN...
...ANNNNND SOMEBODY IS *IN* MY HOME AGAIN.
SOMETIMES OLD-SCHOOL SPY NONSENSE IS BEST...
PUT A BIT OF TAPE ON THE DOORFRAME WITH A STRAND OF HAIR...YOU FIND BROKEN TAPE OR MISSING HAIR, AND YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS.
DAMMIT.

BUT HOW *LARGE* A PROBLEM?
NO.
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
HRRRK--

THIS CAN'T BE IT.

SAN FRANCISCO.
THREE MONTHS LATER.
CAN ONE OF *YOU* JUST WALK ME THROUGH THE NEW PLAN?
--I DON'T HAVE ALL DAY.
RIGHT.
UH.
I GUESS THAT'S A NO.
THAT'S A *HARD* NO.
SORRY I'M LATE, JOE...
...I BROUGHT COFFEE AS A PEACE OFFERING.

FORGIVE ME?
...DAMMIT. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO STAY MAD AT YOU, NAT.
THE REAL QUESTION, JOE, IS WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO STAY MAD? SUCH A WASTE OF TIME.
AS PROMISED, HERE'S THE PLAN REVISION THAT ADDRESSES THE CONCERNS ABOUT FIRE ACCESS.
OH, I SEE. AND YOU JUST TIE IT OFF HERE?
EXACTLY.
VERY CLEVER, NAT.
I PREFER ELEGANT, BUT CLEVER WILL DO.
WHOOSH

FFFFWT
NAT!
OH MY GOD.
DON'T WORRY, BOYS...

...THE DAY IS SAVED.
FROM... LITTER?
NAT, CAN YOU PLEASE NEVER DO THAT AGAIN? AND PUT ON THE DAMN HARD HAT.
NOT THAT IT WOULD SAVE YOU FROM A 20-STORY FALL.
SURE.
SORRY, FELLAS. YOU NEEDED PLANS, I BROUGHT YOU PLANS. NOW I HAVE TO BE MOVING ON.
ALSO, I WILL *NEVER* WEAR THAT HIDEOUS HAT.
SEE YOU FRIDAY!
I... I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
I'VE NEVER EVEN *HEARD* OF ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

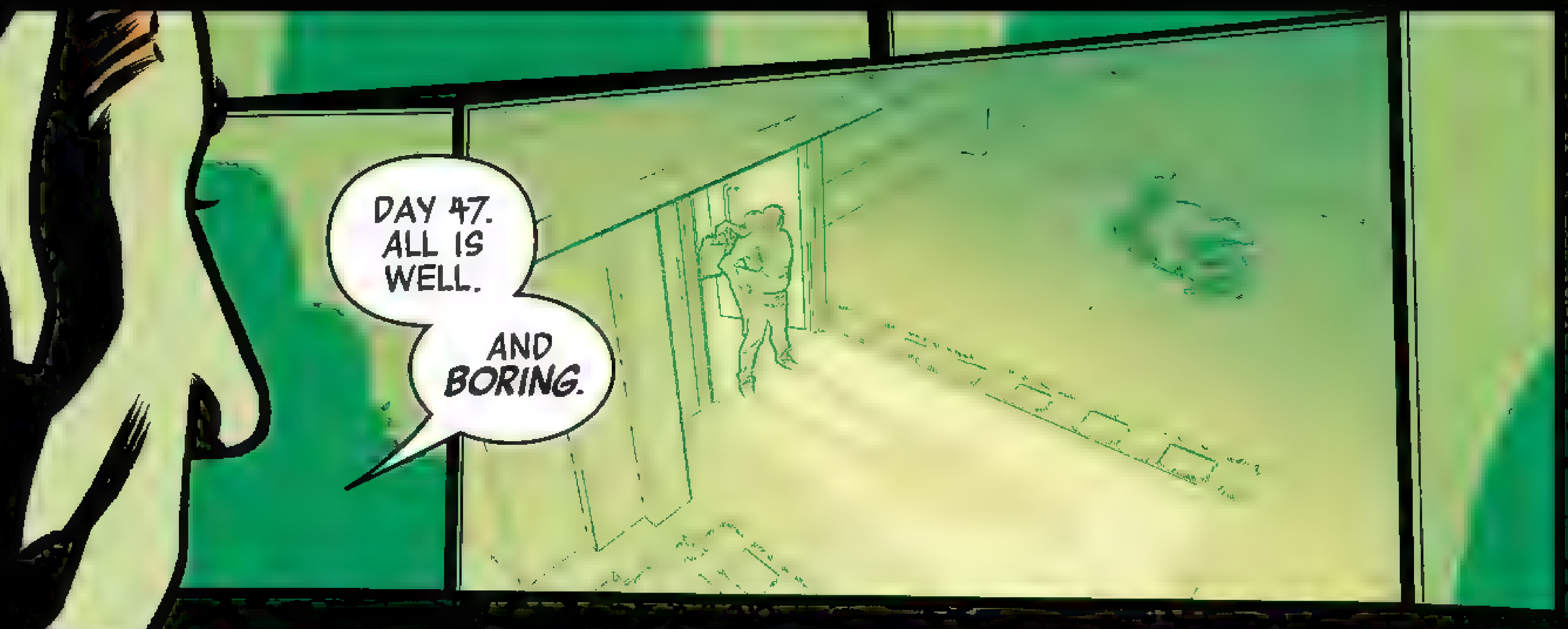
BZZZZZZ
HI. YEAH, I'M HEADING HOME.
--CITIES ACROSS THE U.S., INCLUDING THIS LANDMARK BUILDING BEHIND ME...
255
...LOCATED IN THE HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO--
NO, I'M IN NO MOOD TO COOK.
THOUGHT I'D PICK UP SOME CHINESE FROM THE DRAGON.
...YOU GOT IT.
LOVE YOU TOO.

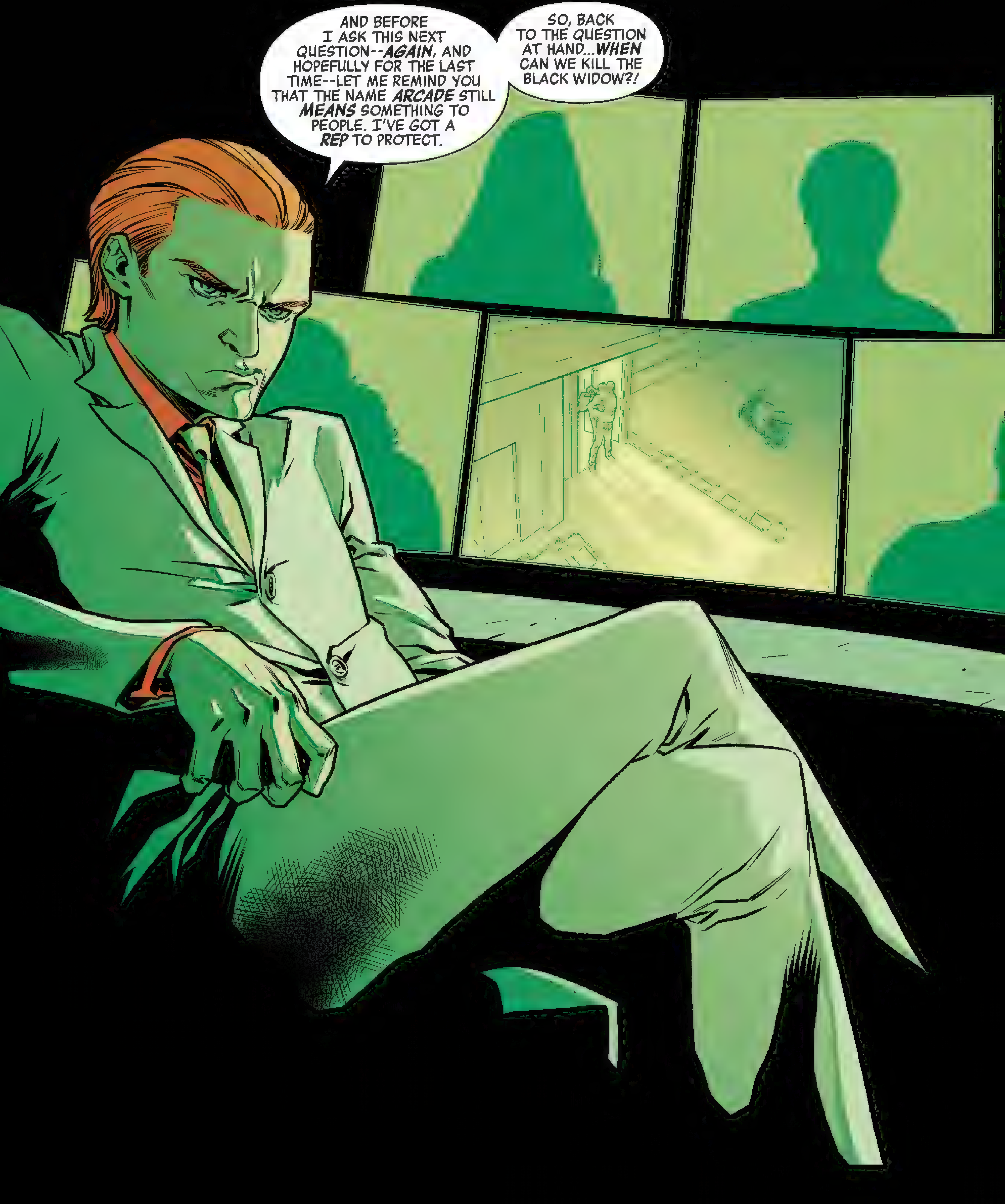
BED-STUY.
HOME OF HAWKEYE.
HISTORIC BUILDINGS UNDER THREAT OF
--CITIES ACROSS THE U.S., INCLUDING THIS LANDMARK BUILDING BEHIND ME...
PFFFFFT
WHAT THE HELL?!
THREAT OF DEMOLITION
MTN
CLICK
Ber
Buck
Chri
CLINT. I'M BUSY.
WAIT--
BEEP
TEXT TEXT TEXT TEXTITY TEXT TEXT
HANG UP ON ME?! SUPER NOT COOL, "WINTER SOLDIER."
BWOOOP

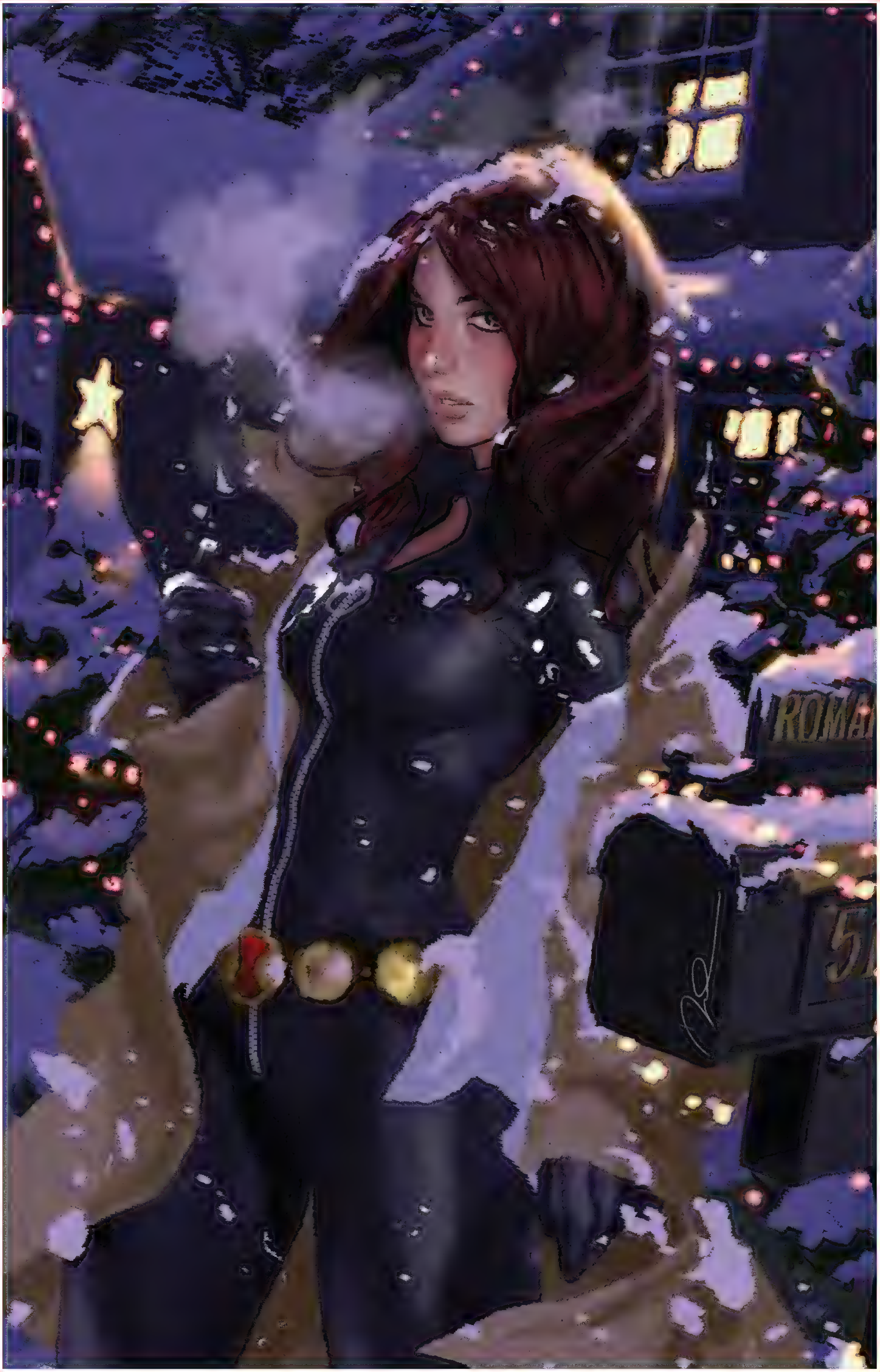
FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO--
RING RING
HA!
THAT'S HER.
I KNOW, BUCKY. I SENT IT TO *YOU*.
SHE'S NOT UNDERCOVER.
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?
SHE WOULDN'T LET A RANDOM NEWSCAST CATCH HER ON FILM IF SHE WAS.
HUH. GOOD POINT. WHEN DID YOU LAST HAVE CONTACT?
THREE MONTHS...MAYBE MORE. SHE JUST VANISHED. AGAIN.
WELL, SHE DOES THAT.
YES. SHE DOES.
HOW LONG SINCE YOU'VE SEEN HER?
ABOUT THE SAME. WE ARGUED. NOTHING FATAL.
I THINK WE GOTTA GO CHECK ON HER.
DIDN'T WE *JUST* DO THIS?
YES. BUT THIS TIME IT WILL BE DIFFERENT.
HOW SO?
NEWS
--IN THE HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO--
WELL, FOR STARTERS...

"THIS TIME WE ALREADY KNOW WHERE SHE IS--
WELL *THIS* DOESN'T SUCK.

WHOA. WHAT'S THIS?
I KNOW.
SAW IT. HAD TO HAVE IT.
IT'S GORGEOUS.
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU COULD RIDE.
I DIDN'T ACTUALLY KNOW MYSELF, BUT IT WAS JUST LIKE...WELL, LIKE RIDING A BIKE.
VERY FUNNY.
AFRAID I'VE WRECKED OUR DINNER... ALL THAT COOL WEATHER AND HIGH SPEED...DIM SUM WILL BE DEAD COLD.
WELL, NATALIE, I SUPPOSE YOU MUST BE PUNISHED, THEN.
IF I MUST, THEN I MUST. DO YOUR WORST, SIR.


DAY 47. ALL IS WELL.
AND BORING.


AND BEFORE I ASK THIS NEXT QUESTION--AGAIN, AND HOPEFULLY FOR THE LAST TIME--LET ME REMIND YOU THAT THE NAME ARCADE STILL MEANS SOMETHING TO PEOPLE. I'VE GOT A REP TO PROTECT.
SO, BACK TO THE QUESTION AT HAND...WHEN CAN WE KILL THE BLACK WIDOW?!



#1 VARIANT BY **GERALD PAREL**

TWO

SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA.
I DON'T KNOW, MAN.
YOU DON'T KNOW *WHAT?*
IT'S NOT WHAT I EXPECTED TO FIND. SHE LOOKS...

...HAPPY.
JUST LIKE SHE DID IN THAT NEWS FOOTAGE. MAYBE...MAYBE SHE'S NOT IN TROUBLE...MAYBE SHE *CHOSE* THIS, BUCKY.
CAN YOU... MOVE OVER A LITTLE? YOU'RE REALLY CROWDING ME HERE.
NOT REALLY, MAN, I GOT A SPIKY PLANT OVER HERE THAT KEEPS POKING ME IN THE BUTT. I HATE IT.
SO WHAT'S THE MOVE?
I DON'T KNOW THAT THERE *IS* A MOVE. NOT YET.
LET'S JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR.
YOU ARE THE ABSOLUTE WORST AT RECON, CLINT. YOU HAVE THE PATIENCE OF A SMALL CHILD.
PLEASE, I HAVE THE PATIENCE OF AT LEAST A NORMAL-SIZED CHILD.
JAMES, I'LL BE IN THE GARAGE FOR A BIT!
HERE WE GO.

--NOT THE SUN YOU'RE TRYING TO FIND, SOMETHING ELSE IS ON YOUR MIND...
TK-TK
...YOU NEED A LITTLE SPACE AND TIME TO BREAK...
TKK
...AWAY?
CAN I HELP YOU?
UH. SORRY. WAS WALKING BY AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THE BIKE. IT'S INCREDIBLE.
THANKS. I JUST GOT IT. YOU KNOW BIKES?

A BIT. YOU MIND IF I TAKE A CLOSER LOOK?
THANKS. I'M...CLINT.
NO, COME ON IN. I'M *NATALIE.*
NICE TO MEET YOU, CLINT.
MAN, IT'S REALLY SPECTACULAR, *HUH?*
LIKE A WORK OF ART. YOU HAVE ONE?
NAH. TOO RICH FOR MY BLOOD. MAYBE SOMEDAY.
IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A DREAM.
COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER MYSELF.
WE ALL NEED SOMETHING TO HANG ON TO. SOMETHING TO WORK TOWARD, RIGHT?
I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.
WELL, NOT TO BE TOO FORWARD, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE YOU ALREADY HAVE IT ALL--BEST HOUSE ON THE BLOCK, BEST MOTORCYCLE ON THE MARKET, WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

OH C'MON, THERE'S CERTAINLY MORE TO LIFE THAN HOUSES AND BIKES.
WELL, I'M VERY SHALLOW.
HEH. WE ALL GO THROUGH THAT PHASE, I SUPPOSE.
EASY TO SAY WHEN YOU ALREADY HAVE THE BIKE AND THE HOUSE.
HEH. GOOD POINT.
WHAT DO YOU DO, IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING?
OH, I'M AN ARCHITECT. YOU?
UM. SECURITY. FREELANCE DEAL.
THAT MUST BE INTERESTING WORK. YOU DO IT MOSTLY IN SAN FRANCISCO?
NO, WE TRAVEL ALL OVER.
OH, THAT'S NICE. WE WERE IN FRANCE FOR YEARS, I HAD A PRACTICE THERE, BUT WE JUST RELOCATED HERE THREE MONTHS AGO...OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT? IT'S BEEN A BLUR, TO BE HONEST.
BUT...YOU LIKE IT HERE? YOU'RE HAPPY?
LOVE IT. SERIOUSLY, WE'RE DEVASTATINGLY HAPPY. IT'S KIND OF GROSS TO BE HONEST.
SCRITCH
I...
OH--

--MY LITTLE ESCAPE ARTIST, ALWAYS FINDING A WAY OUT.
NAT! DO YOU HAVE STEVIE? HE'S ESCAPED AGAIN!
I HAVE HIM!
I...YOU... YOU HAVE A **SON.**
YEAH, THIS IS LITTLE **STEVIE.** STEVIE, SAY HI TO CLINT.
GAH.
HEH. THAT'S STEVIE FOR "HI, CLINT."
HE'S... BEAUTIFUL.
SEE? EVEN BETTER THAN A BIKE.

I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW HE GOT-- OH, HI.
...HI.
JAMES, THIS IS CLINT. CLINT, THIS IS MY *FIANCÉ,* JAMES.
...NICE TO MEET YOU.
YOU TOO.
UH. ANYWAY, THANKS FOR LETTING ME TAKE A LOOK AT THE BIKE.
NO PROBLEM.
HAVE A... HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND.
YOU TOO.
SAY BYE-BYE, STEVIE.
BYE-BYE EVIE!

THERE'S... THERE'S A BABY.
I SAW. IS IT... YOU THINK IT'S *HERS?*
I...I DON'T KNOW...BUT IT LOOKS JUST LIKE HER. AND IT'S NAMED STEVE.
HOW COULD THAT BE POSSIBLE...SHE'S ONLY BEEN MISSING A FEW MONTHS AT MOST!
I DON'T KNOW... HE'S AT LEAST A YEAR OLD. I'M SORRY, MAN, MY MIND IS JUST REELING.
WHAT ABOUT HER, DID SHE RECOGNIZE YOU? GIVE YOU A MESSAGE? EVEN JUST SIGNAL YOU WITH HER EYES?
NO. NOTHING. AND I GAVE HER LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES.
...HOW DID SHE SEEM?
SHE SEEMED SO HAPPY, BUCK. LIKE...IT'S HER, IT'S ABSOLUTELY HER, BUT SHE'S SO HAPPY. LIKE SHE'S LIVING IN A PERFECT DREAM.
I...I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW IF IT'S SOMETHING WE *SHOULD* BE "RESCUING" HER FROM.

YOU COMING?
YES! COMING!
...AND I PUT THIS LITTLE BELL ON HIM... HE HATES IT, BUT IT'S A LIFESAVER, I SWEAR. YOU'VE NEVER SEEN A BABY THIS CLEVER.
HAHA. OKAY. HE DOESN'T TAKE IT OFF?
OH, HE *DEFINITELY* TAKES IT OFF... BUT YOU CAN HEAR HIM DOING IT, SO YOU GET A HEAD START AT LEAST.
SMART.
HI, HELEN, I'M NATALIE. THANKS SO MUCH FOR COMING BACK. JAMES SAID YOU WERE A WIZ WITH STEVIE LAST TIME.
MY PLEASURE.
MOMMA.
THERE'S TONS OF FOOD IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, AND THE RESTAURANT NUMBER AND OUR MOBILE NUMBERS ARE ON THE FRIDGE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.
I SHOULDN'T BE TOO LATE.
GREAT.

YEAH. WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.
TWO OF THEM. VERY HANDSOME. VERY ANNOYING.
IT'S NOT A PROBLEM.
SURE. TWO QUICK SHOTS, OR MAYBE SOMETHING MORE CREATIVE, PROBLEM SOLVED.
WE ALWAYS KNEW SOME SUPER HEROES WOULD COME LOOKING. THESE TWO FOR CERTAIN. LEAVE THEM ALONE.
IF ANYTHING, WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL. CLINT BARTON STORMING INTO THAT GARAGE WAS BETTER THAN ANY TEST WE COULD HAVE DEVISED. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN HER LIFE--AND SHE DIDN'T EVEN BLINK.
SO WE JUST LET THEM STAND AROUND IN THE BUSHES?!
FOR NOW.
THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
YOU THINK ATTACKING THEM ON HER LAWN ISN'T GOING TO TRIGGER HER? WE HIRED YOU, ARCADE, SO STICK TO THE SCRIPT. FOR NOW WE BIDE OUR TIME.
AT PRESENT I AM MORE CONCERNED WITH THE BABYSITTER. ANYONE RECOGNIZE HER?
NO.
NO.
...NO.
I HATE THIS JOB SO MUCH. IT'S LIKE TORTURE.

COME HOME SOON.
FAST AS I CAN.
BYE.
BYE.
BEEP BEEP
HELP!
MMMMFFF!

THIS IS INSANE. WHAT AM I DOING?
...HELLO?
CALL 9-1-1 AND GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE, NAT.
I...I'VE CALLED THE POLICE.
SHHHFTTTTT
OH GOD.
WHAT HAVE I WALKED INTO?!
WELL, TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE, AND THIS ONE EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN THE FIRST.

GROSS.
RRRRRIIIIIPPP
SNAP
GET HER.
ARRRGGGHH!

WHACK
WHOA.
WHAM
=GASP=
YOU OKAY?
Y-YES.
IF YOU CAN WALK, YOU SHOULD GO.
W-WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I'M FINE.
FWWIIIP

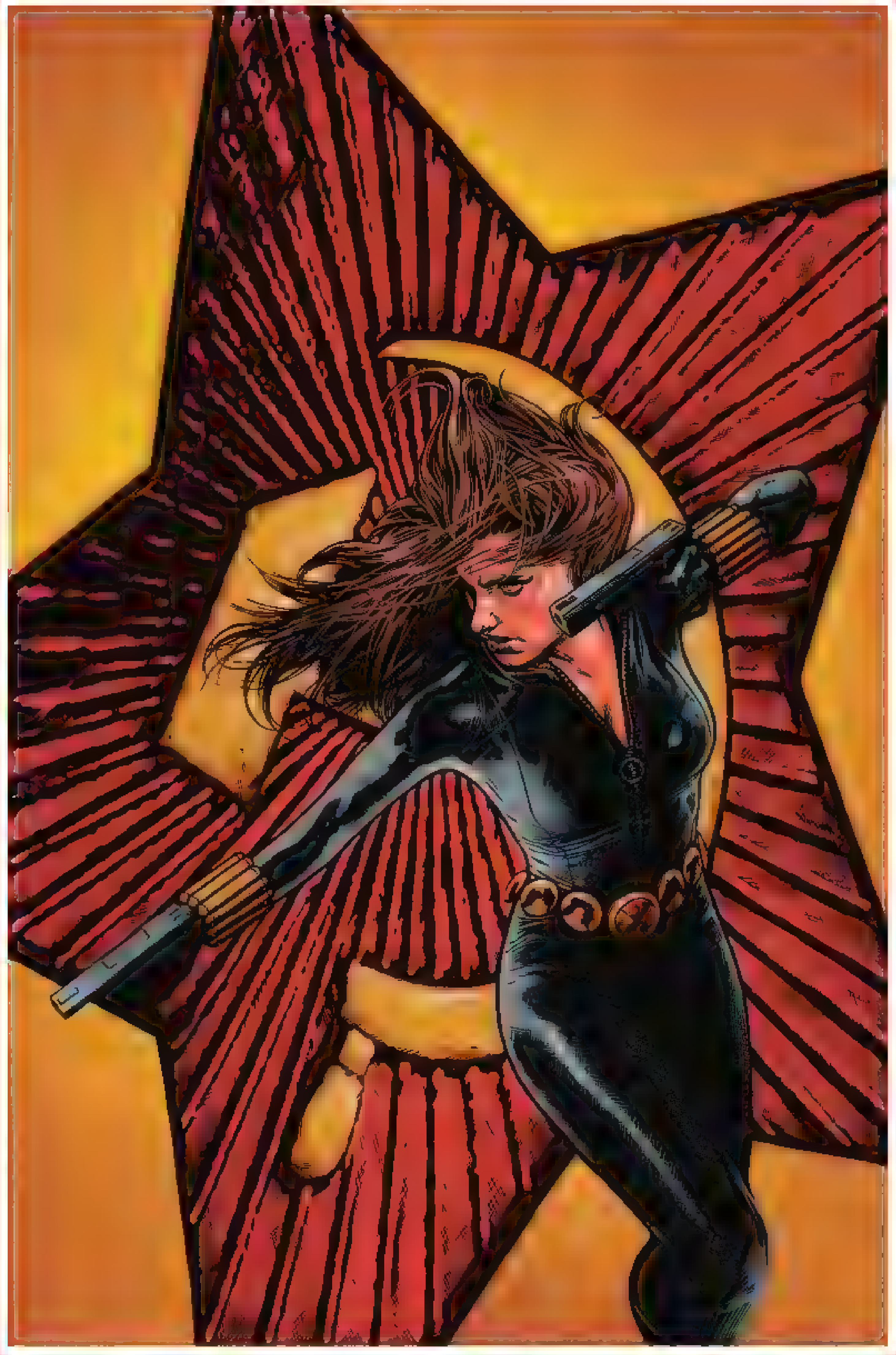
KRACK
OH, $#@%! C'MON!
THUNK
AAAIIIIIIEEE!
GUESS IT'S MORE LIKE *FIVE* FOR THE PRICE OF ONE, HUH?
YOU GUYS WANNA KEEP GOING, OR ARE WE GOOD?
KRRRACK

FSS-SSH
WHAM
YOU--
AHHHHHHHGGGHH!
SNAP
=GROAN=
=KOFF=
=KOFF=
HNNNNG.
YES, HI.
9-1-1?

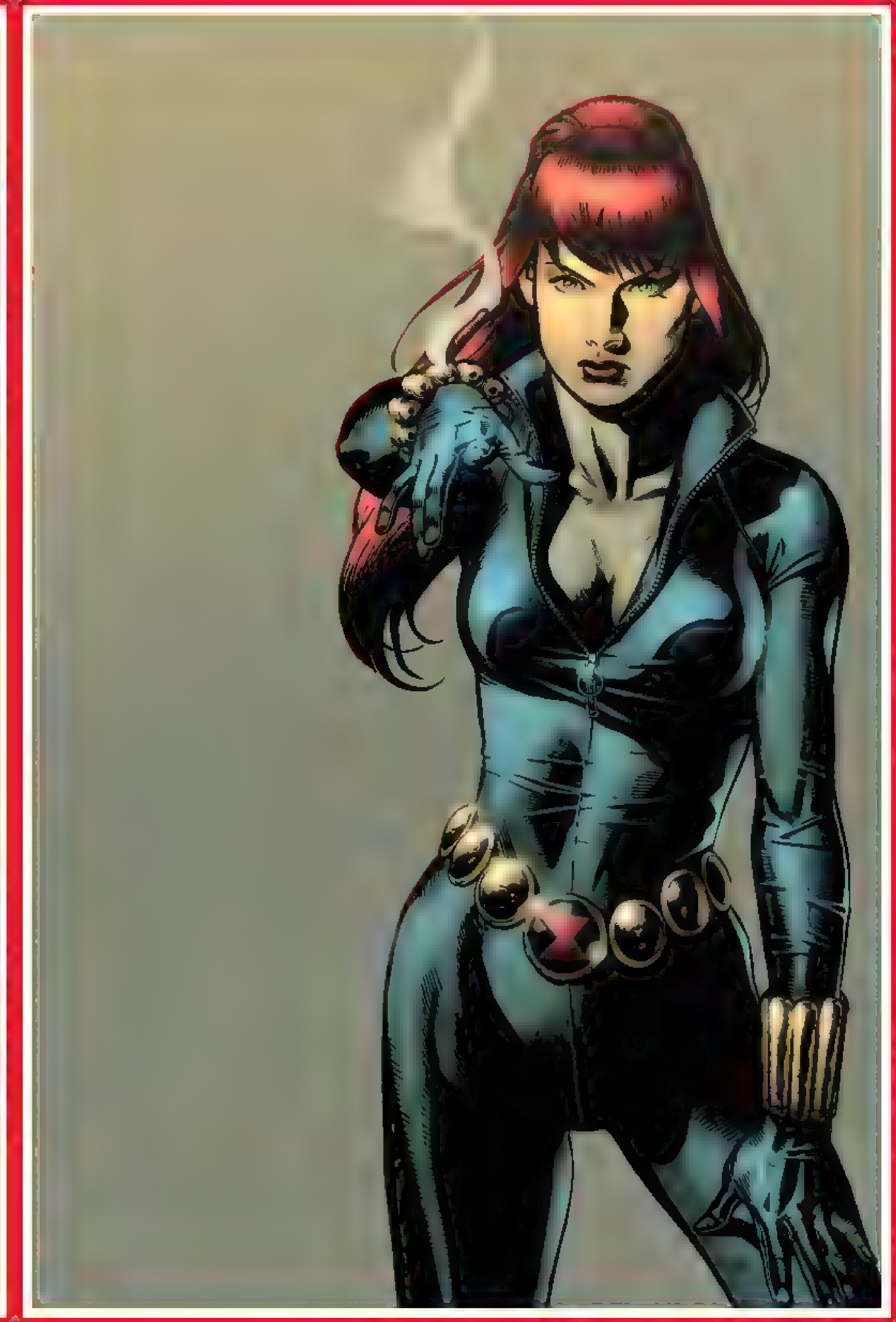
EVERYTHING WENT FINE? HE WAS GOOD?
HE WAS AN ANGEL...WITH THE POWERS OF HOUDINI.
HEH. SORRY ABOUT THAT. WE'RE NOT SURE WHERE HE GETS IT.
I'M GETTING SO DESPERATE I CAUGHT MYSELF LOOKING SERIOUSLY AT THE CAGES LAST TIME WE WERE AT THE ZOO!
IT'S OKAY. LET'S JUST SAY I'VE HANDLED WORSE.
HEY, UH, EVERYTHING OKAY? YOUR DRESS?
OH, SURE. JUST CAUGHT IT ON THE CAR DOOR, SEAM CAME RIGHT OPEN.
THANKS AGAIN, HELEN. EXPECT TO HEAR FROM US AGAIN!
I HOPE I DO.
BEST NIGHT EVER, LOGAN.
MRRROW?

COO.
HELLO, MY LOVE, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ASLEEP.
ARE YOU PLOTTING YOUR NEXT ESCAPE?
...CAN I TELL YOU A SECRET, MON PETIT CHOU?
=GURGLE=
YOU KNOW WHAT...HOW ABOUT A SONG INSTEAD?
IT'S NOT THE SUN YOU'RE TRYING TO FIND...
...SOMETHING ELSE IS ON YOUR MIND...
...YOU NEED A LITTLE SPACE AND TIME...
<WHAT HAVE WE DONE?>

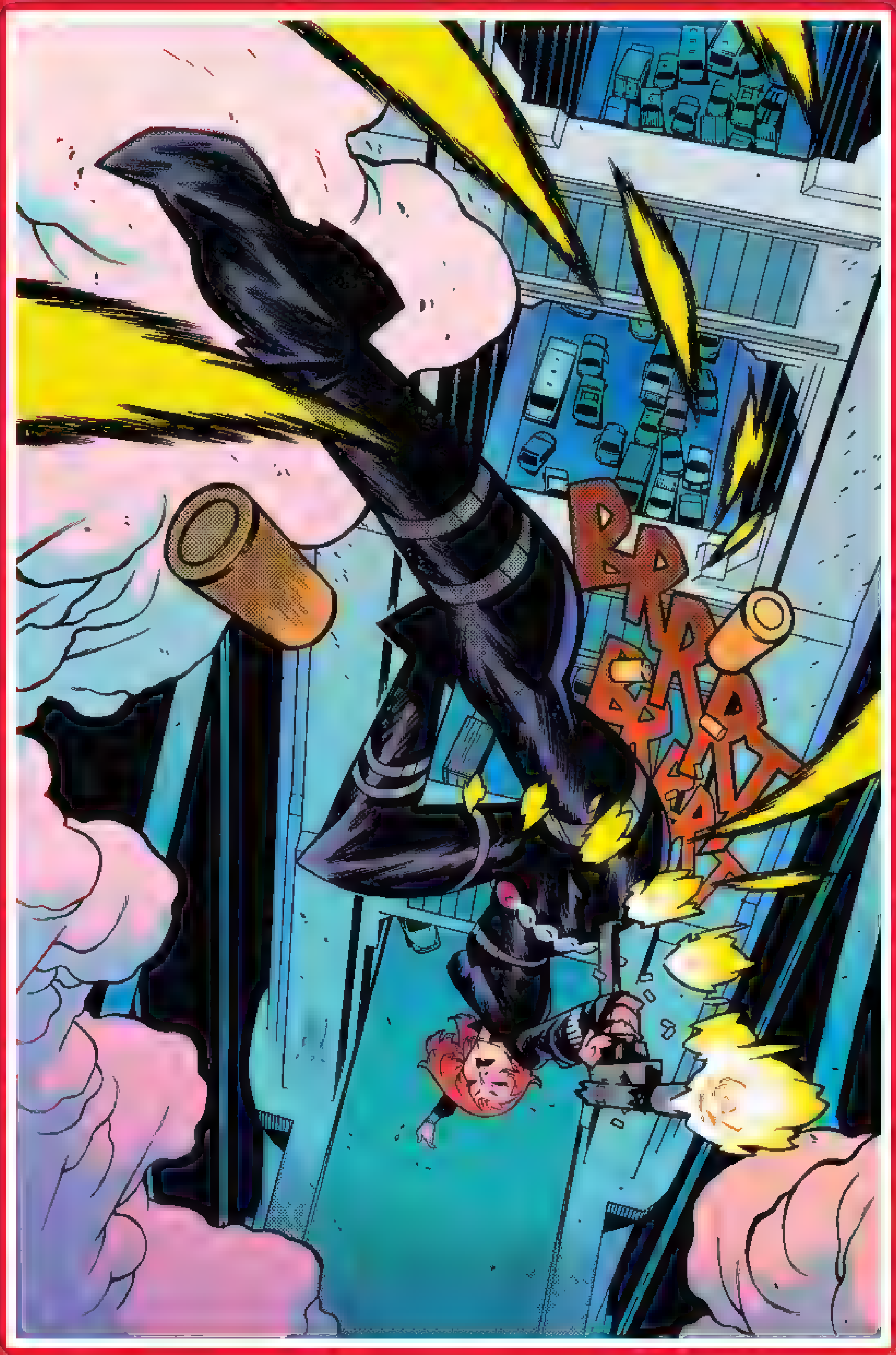
STEV
COO
WAIT... WHAT IS...
W-WHAT HAVE I DONE? I...I MADE A *BOMB?!*
WHY?



#1 VARIANT BY **TRAVIS CHAREST**



#1 VARIANT BY **J.G. JONES** & **DAVE McCAIG**



#1 VARIANT BY **KIM JACINTO** & **TAMRA BONVILLAIN**

THREE

SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA.
THE HOME OF NATALIE, JAMES AND STEVIE.
MMMMMM. HI.
HI.
YOU GOT IN LATE.
FLIGHT WAS DELAYED.
I MISSED YOU.
GOOD.
CAR!
IS HE *IN* THE ROOM?
IMPOSSIBLE. HE CAN'T BE.

HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE, HOUDINI?
CAR!
CARS
WE'VE HONESTLY CREATED A MONSTER.
I KNOW, BUT SUCH A HANDSOME ONE, AREN'T YOU, DUCKLING?
DUCKS!
DUCKS!
HOW ABOUT WE GO TO THE PARK AND SEE YOUR DUCKS TODAY?
EEEEEEE!
CAN YOU MEET US AT LUNCH, NAT?
CARS
I CAN'T. I'VE GOT A BUNCH OF MEETINGS AND THEN I HAVE TO DUCK OUT EARLY FOR MY FITTING.
DUCK!
YES, DARLING, DUCK.
MAYBE WE COULD GET HIM ONE OF THOSE COLLARS THAT RELEASES A TERRIBLE SMELL WHEN HE GOES OUTSIDE A PERIMETER?
HEH. DO WE REALLY NEED *MORE* TERRIBLE SMELLS IN OUR LIFE?
POOP STINKY!
EXACTLY, MY LOVE.
OUTWITTED AGAIN.

WHAT THE HELL ARE WE GONNA DO, BUCKY?
WE CAN'T PULL HER OUT OF THERE. SHE'S SO DAMN HAPPY SHE'D MURDER US FOR RUINING HER LIFE.
BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE HER THERE. WHO KNOWS WHO'S BEHIND THIS, WHAT THEY WANT, WHAT THEY'LL DO TO HER?!
DON'T YOU HAVE *ANYTHING* TO SAY?!
WITH *YOU* TALKING? WHO COULD GET A WORD IN?
FINE. I'M QUIET. *SO* QUIET. TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK. PLEASE.
I THINK WE HAVE TO PULL HER OUT.
YOU'RE RIGHT. SHE MIGHT KILL US.
BUT SOMEONE HAS TO BE BEHIND ALL OF THIS, AND THEIR MOTIVES CANNOT BE GOOD. THE ENDGAME IS SURELY SOMETHING HORRIFIC.
$#%@#!
IF EITHER OF YOU TOUCHES HER, I WILL *BREAK* YOU--
--FOR YOU'LL FIND *I'M* A MUCH LESS *MERCIFUL* WIDOW.
YELENA?!
YELENA BELOVA.
GRADUATE OF THE RED ROOM.
HAS BEEN BOTH ENEMY
AND ALLY TO NATASHA.

YOU TELLING ME YOU *DON'T* THINK THIS IS A SETUP?! HOW CAN WE RISK LEAVING HER IN THERE?
WE CAN ALL SEE THAT THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A TRAP. BUT WHAT WE CANNOT KNOW IS NATALIA'S MIND.
PERHAPS SHE *CHOOSES* TO BE IN THIS TRAP. PERHAPS SHE BIDES HER TIME FOR SOME REASON UNKNOWN TO US.
PERHAPS... IT IS EVEN A TRAP SHE DESIGNED HERSELF.
YOU MEAN A COVER IDENTITY THAT SHE'S WILLINGLY SLIPPED INTO...EVEN *BRAINWASHED HERSELF* INTO?
YES.
I DON'T BUY IT.
IT IS UNLIKELY, I AGREE. THE ONLY THING THAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT WE MUST TRUST NATALIA TO BE NATALIA. AND TO LET THE CHOICES BE HERS. ESPECIALLY BECAUSE...
BECAUSE *WHAT?!*
THE CHILD *IS* HERS.
I TESTED HIS DNA. HE BELONGS TO NATALIA AND JAMES, THERE IS NO DOUBT.
HOW'S THAT EVEN POSSIBLE? HE'S LIKE A YEAR OLD, SHE'S ONLY BEEN MISSING FOR THREE MONTHS...FOUR TOPS!
I HAVE NO ANSWERS FOR YOU, BARTON. BUT I AM ON THE INSIDE ALREADY--
THE BABYSITTER! I *KNEW* THAT BABYSITTER LOOKED FAMILIAR.
YES. SO I WILL STAY AND KEEP WATCH. YOU WILL GO. I WILL CONTACT YOU IF THINGS CHANGE.
HEY, YOU CAN'T JUST--
CLINT. STOP. LET HER DO THIS. SHE KNOWS HOW TO FIND US WHEN SHE NEEDS US.

SAN FRANCISCO.
FNIS'
Elena Hughes Brida
SNIFF
MISS GREY? ARE YOU...ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HI. I...I'M HELEN, YOUR BABYSITTER...
...I--I'M SO SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, I HAPPENED TO BE WALKING BY AND I SAW YOU THERE.
YOU LOOKED...WELL, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED HELP.
HELEN. THAT'S...THAT'S SO KIND OF YOU, BUT NO, I'M FINE.
IT'S SILLY.
WHAT IS?
MY LIFE IS LITERALLY PERFECT.
PERFECT MAN. PERFECT CHILD. PERFECT JOB. ABOUT TO HAVE THE PERFECT WEDDING...HELL, I EVEN HAVE THE PERFECT MOTORCYCLE...SO WHY DOES SOMETHING FEEL SO WRONG?
LIKE I'M MISSING A PIECE. A PIECE SO HUGE THAT NOBODY COULD POSSIBLY LIVE WITHOUT IT?

MAYBE IT'S NOT AS PERFECT AS IT SEEMS?
NO, IT REALLY IS. I...I'M NOT SOMEONE PRONE TO EXAGGERATION. NOR AM I PRONE TO SELF-DELUSION.
I AM POSSIBLY THE LUCKIEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD.
EXCEPT?
EXCEPT SOMETIMES I CATCH THIS FLUTTER OF SOMETHING AND IT'S LIKE THERE'S ANOTHER ME TRAPPED INSIDE THIS BODY AND...
...AND SHE'S ALWAYS SCREAMING.
YOU WILL FORGIVE ME, MISS GREY, BUT THAT... DOES NOT SEEM LIKE SOMETHING A HAPPY WOMAN SAYS.
HEH. YOU ARE SO RIGHT.
I AM?
IT'S A CRAZY THING TO SAY. OR EVEN THINK.
AND I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IT IS. IT'S THAT DAMNED LITTLE VOICE THAT ALWAYS TELLS YOU THAT YOU AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH. THAT YOU CAN'T GET WHAT YOU WANT BECAUSE NOBODY DOES, NOT REALLY. THAT YOU DON'T DESERVE GOOD THINGS.
BUT THAT'S NONSENSE. I HAVE EVERYTHING I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED, AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I WASTE ONE SECOND OF IT.

ARCADE'S "CONTROL ROOM."
THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. THE ENTIRE POINT OF THIS ENDEAVOR WAS FOR NONE OF US TO EVER *BE* HERE.
VIPER A.K.A. MADAME HYDRA.
ARCADE. TECH AND GAMES GENIUS. CRIMINAL MASTERMIND. JERK.
WEEPING LION -- 2.0?! TWO COUSINS DEAD BY THE BLACK WIDOW'S HAND... NOW SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.
WELL, THINGS CHANGE.
ONLY BECAUSE ARCADE IS A MORON.
HEY!
SHE'S RIGHT.
OH, LEAVE HIM ALONE. IT'S NOT HIS FAULT. IF YOU MUST KNOW, *WE* ARE THE ONES WHO FORCED THE MEETING.
THE RED GUARDIAN. A.K.A. ALEXEI SHOSTAKOV. RUSSIAN AGENT. FORMER ENEMY, ALLY AND HUSBAND OF THE BLACK WIDOW.
SNAPDRAGON. ASSASSIN, AMONG OTHER THINGS.
WHY?
BECAUSE IT'S FINALLY TIME TO KILL HER.
WHAT?!
WE HAVE TOYED WITH HER LONG ENOUGH. WE HAVE BROUGHT HER TO THE ABSOLUTE PINNACLE OF HAPPINESS.
NOW WE RIP IT AWAY IN THE MOST BRUTAL FASHION POSSIBLE. I THOUGHT YOU WOULD ALL LIKE TO SEE IT UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.

THAT... THAT WAS NEVER THE PLAN.
YOU WANTED THE BLACK WIDOW GONE JUST LIKE THE REST OF US.
YES, BUT I'M NOT AN IDIOT. I HAVE BIG THINGS COMING AND I WANT HER ***OFF THE BOARD.***
DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TRIED TO KILL THE BLACK WIDOW? IT'S AS CLOSE TO IMPOSSIBLE AS YOU GET.
THE WOMAN MIGHT AS WELL HAVE A THOUSAND LIVES!
WE WENT TO CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE AND EXPENSE TO TRAP HER IN HER OWN PERSONAL MATRIX... AND IT ACTUALLY WORKED.
SHE'S BEEN SO DAMN HAPPY THAT SHE'S BEEN OUT OF THE GAME FOR MONTHS.
AND NOW YOU JUST WANT TO THROW THAT AWAY SO THAT YOU CAN WHAT? GET REVENGE?
SHE ***MURDERED*** US! SHE DOESN'T GET TO GO OFF AND LIVE IN HER OWN PERSONAL PARADISE! I NEVER SIGNED UP FOR THAT. SHE HAS TO ***DIE!***
THAT WAS NOT THE DEAL!
YOU SIGNED ON FOR THIS PLAN, LION. LIKE IT OR NOT, WE AGREED TO THIS COURSE.

NO! SHE WILL PAY FOR HER CRIMES! SHE DOESN'T GET PARADISE.
DO NOT MESS WITH MY PLANS, LION.
HOW CAN YOU BEAR IT?! SEEING HER HAPPY...IT'S ANATHEMA!
YOU'D WASTE EVERYTHING WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED JUST TO PUT A BULLET IN HER?
NOT EXACTLY.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
IT MEANS WE ALREADY *DID* WASTE IT. IT'S DONE, FRIENDS.
AND WE'VE GOT SOMETHING MUCH MORE PAINFUL IN MIND THAN A BULLET.
NO.
YOU ABSOLUTE FOOL. YOU'VE MURDERED US ALL.

CRAP. SALES GIRL MIGHT HAVE BEEN RIGHT. HOPE THIS DRESS SHAKES OUT OKAY.
ALL THAT MONEY, ALL THAT TIME, DRESS ALL WRINKLED.
GOOD JOB, NAT. WHO KNEW MOTORCYCLES AND WEDDING DRESSES, NOT A GREAT MATCH.
JAMES IS GOING TO DELIGHT IN THE "I TOLD YOU SO" OF IT ALL--
WAIT.
SOMETHING-- SOMETHING'S WRONG.

I AM ODDLY CALM. MY MIND ODDLY SHARP.
CREAK
JAMES? YOU HERE, BABE?
JUST LIKE THE OTHER NIGHT IN THE ALLEY. LIKE I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO.
WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN? DO *WHAT?* I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING.
JAMES?
I JUST KNOW... SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT.
THE SMEAR OF BLOOD ON THE WALL RUNS MY OWN BLOOD COLD.
PART OF ME KNOWS THEY'RE DEAD ALREADY.
PART OF ME IS SCREAMING.
THE REST IS COILED TO STRIKE.

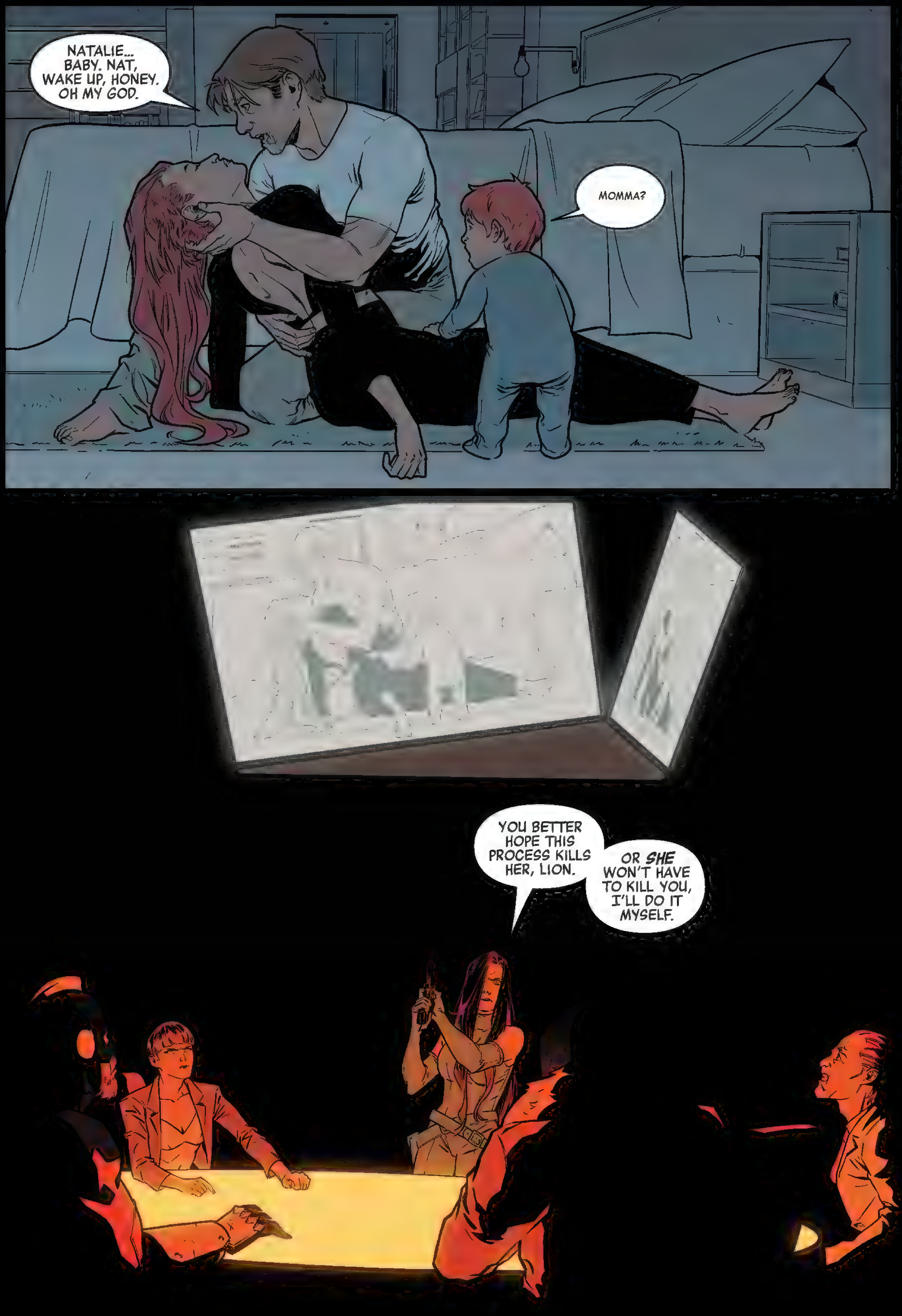
THWACK
HNNNG.
SHFFFF
UMMMPF!
SLICE
TANG
GAHHH!
FLIP
GAH!
RIIIIP
AHHHH!
K-TANG

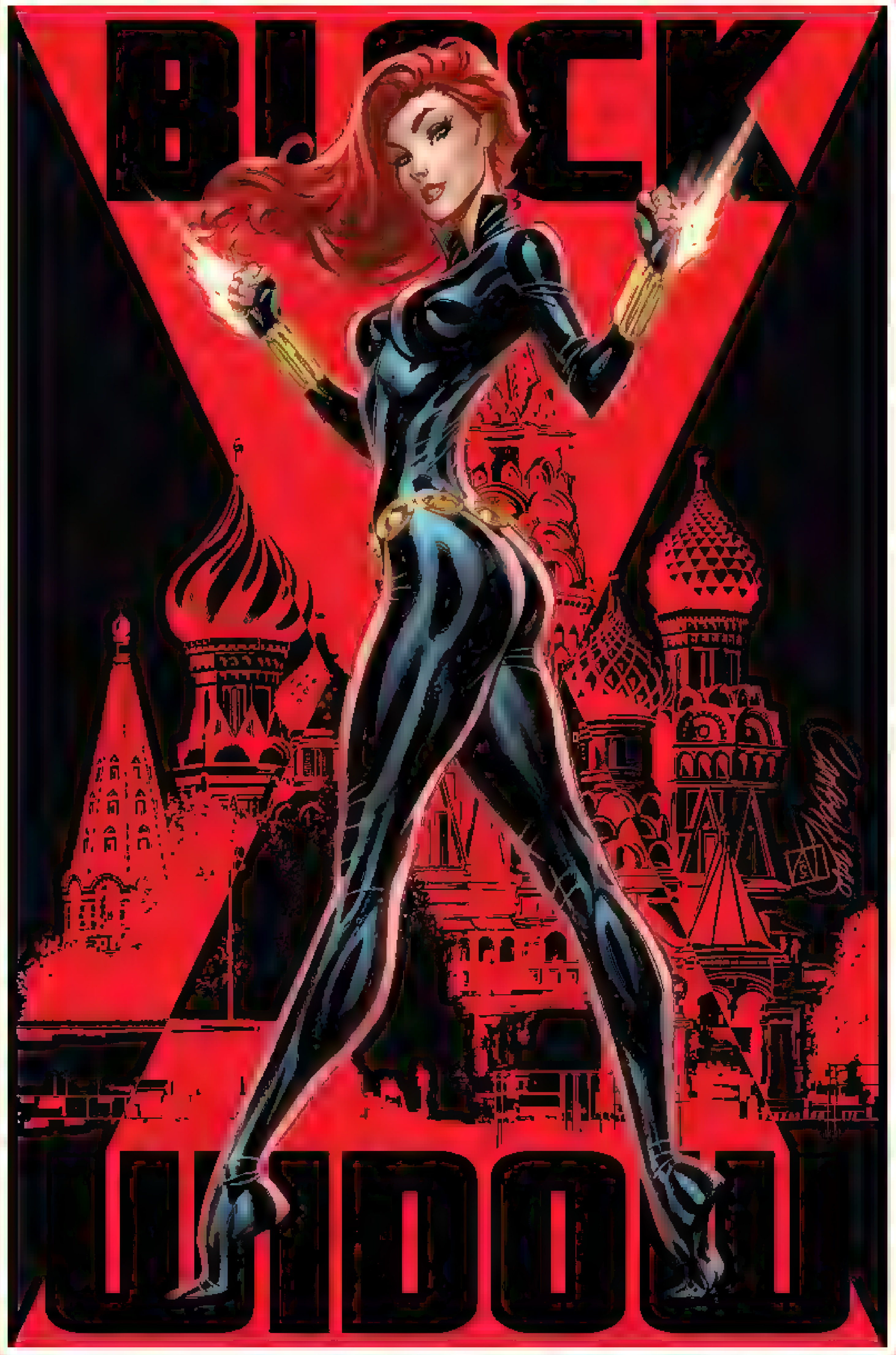
SWIFFF
THUNK
AHHHHHH!
ответьте мне!
RUSSIAN. I KNOW RUSSIAN?
убей их сейчас!
"KILL THEM NOW."
OH MY GOD. JAMES AND STEVIE--THEY'RE STILL ALIVE.
SLAM
нанести им вред, и это последний акт вашей жизни.

GROAN
BLAM
BLAM
BEEP BEEP BOOP
MY HOMEMADE "SMOKE DETECTOR BOMB."
IS THIS WHY I MADE IT?
SO IT WOULD BE HERE WAITING FOR ME? FOR A... "RAINY DAY"?

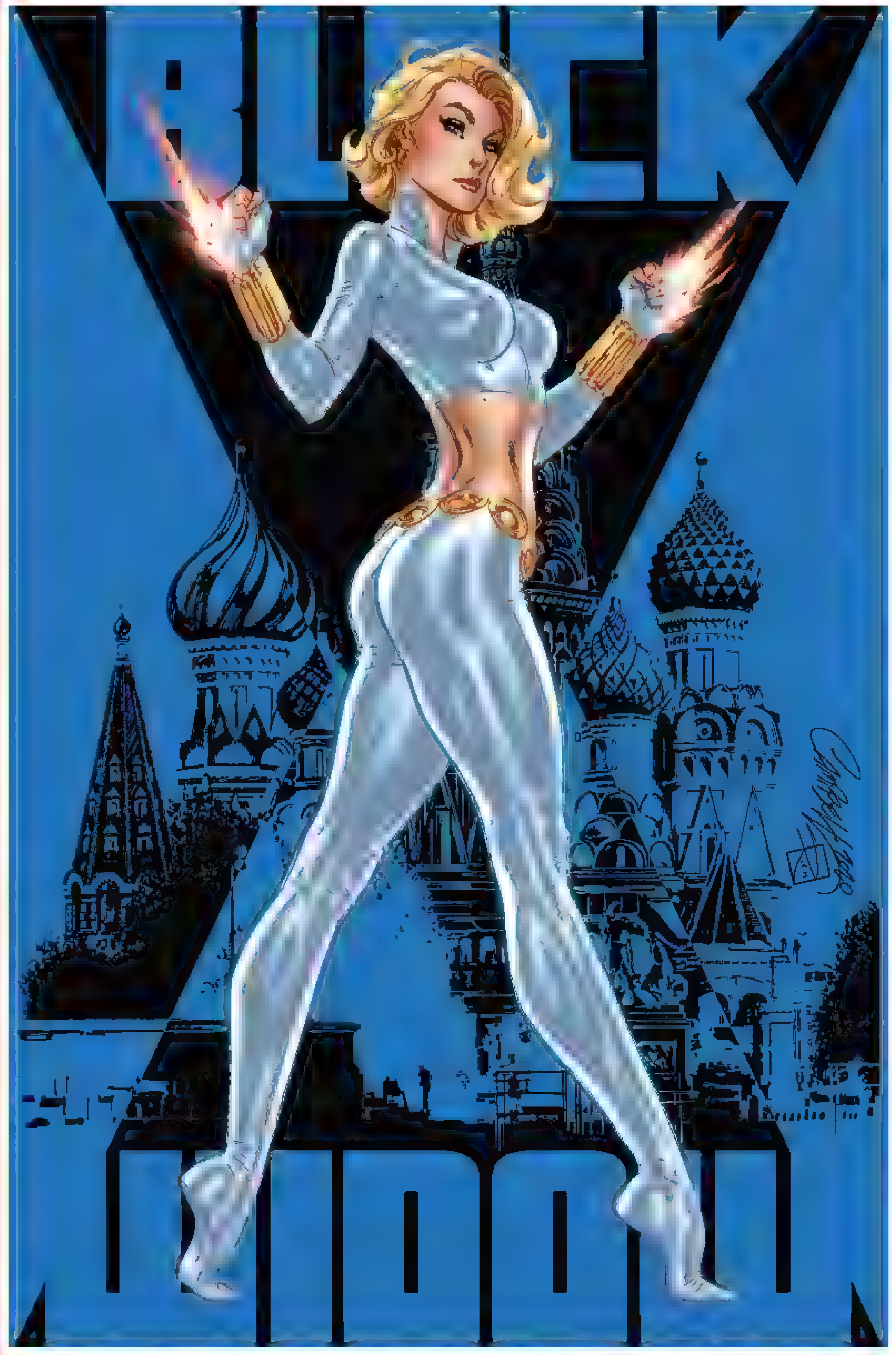
PING PING PING
SFFFT--
SMASH
-BZZT
THUNK
AH!
YANK
ARRGGGHH!
BOOM

WAS... WAS THAT A BOMB?
...YES. I MADE IT IN THE GARAGE.
...OKAY.
ARE YOU OKAY?
YES. BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING.
ME EITHER. BUT I'M GOING TO FIND OUT.
BABE...I DON'T THINK I'M JUST AN ARCHITECT.
YEAH, I'M GETTING THAT.
BAY-BUH.
=HNNNNG.=
NAT?

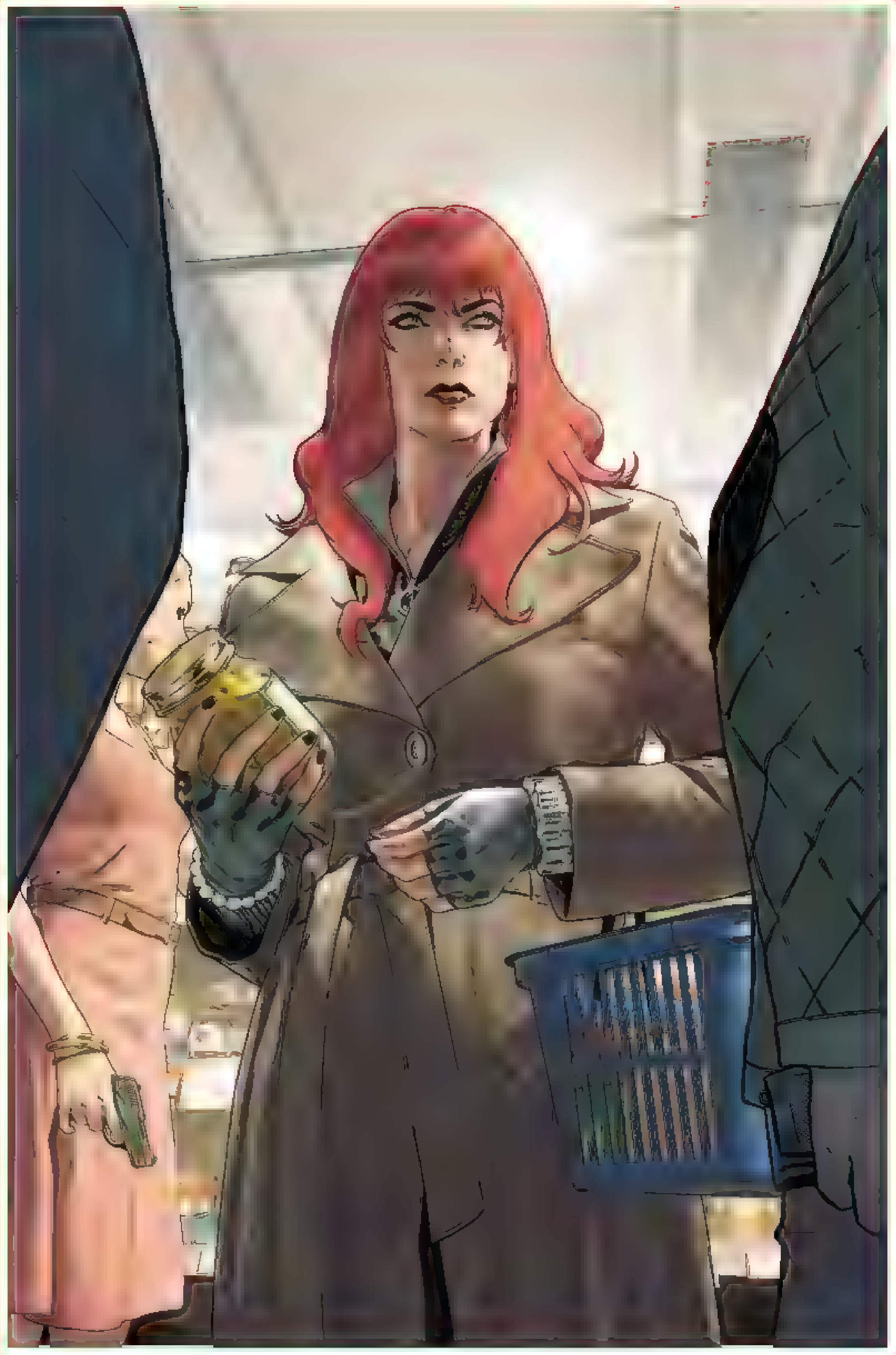

NATALIE... BABY. NAT, WAKE UP, HONEY. OH MY GOD.
MOMMA?
YOU BETTER HOPE THIS PROCESS KILLS HER, LION.
OR *SHE* WON'T HAVE TO KILL YOU, I'LL DO IT MYSELF.


BLACK
WIDOW

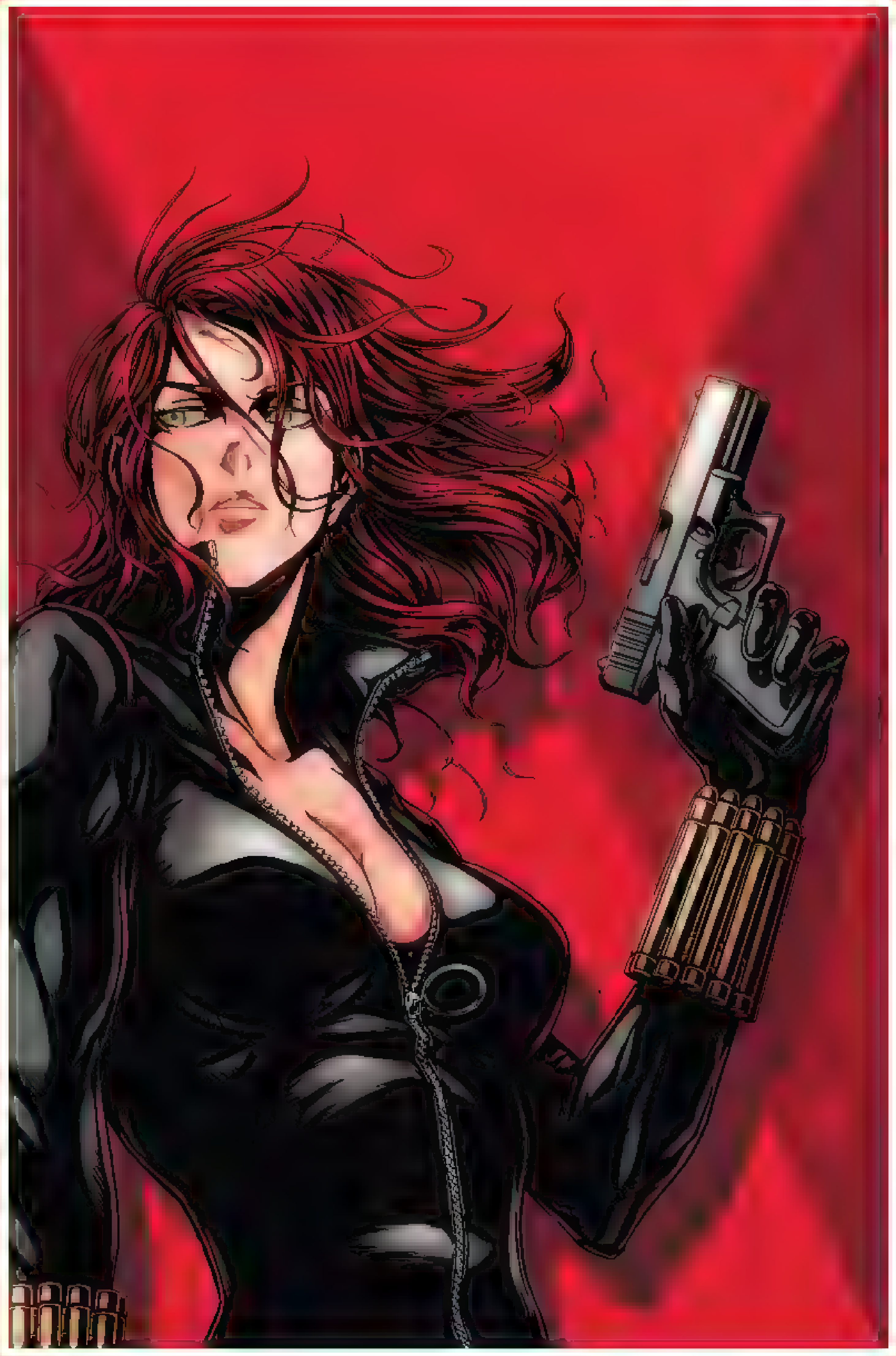
#1 VARIANT BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **SABINE RICH**


BLACK
WIDOW

#2 VARIANT BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **SABINE RICH**



#2 VARIANT BY **MATTIA DE IULIS**



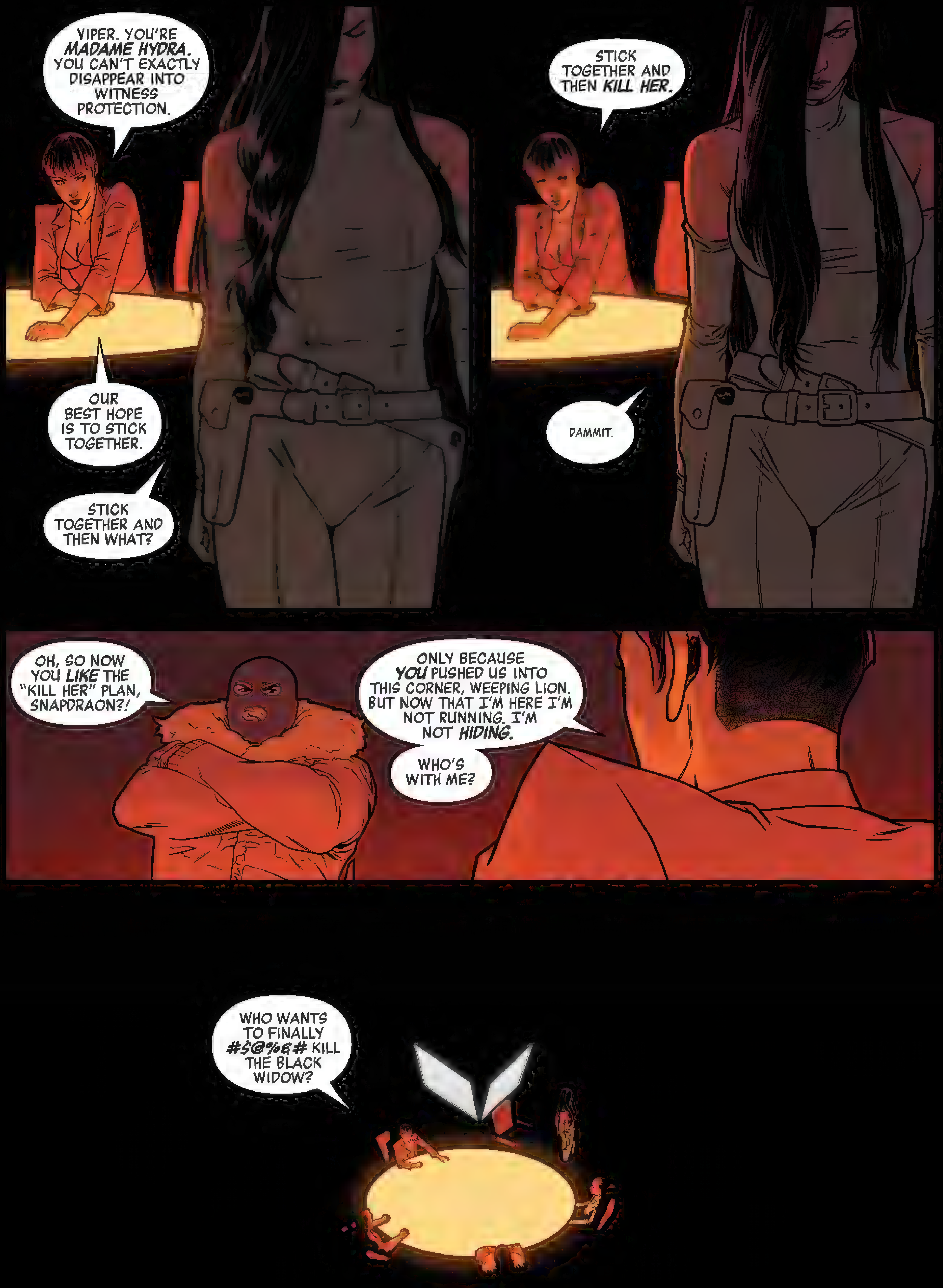
#2 VARIANT BY **TAKASHI OKAZAKI**
& **JORDIE BELLAIRE**

FOUR

SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA.
NAT? BABY... COME BACK TO US.
NATALIE. PLEASE.
MOMMA.
--AHHHHHH!
AH! YOU'RE AWAKE!
MIND IS SWIMMING.
BUT UNDER THAT...UNDER THAT THERE'S PERFECT *CLARITY*.
NAT? BABY?
MOMMA.

I REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
MOMMA?
WELL... MAYBE NOT *PERFECT* CLARITY.
THEY ARE EVERYTHING. I CAN'T LOSE THEM.

ARCADE'S "CONTROL ROOM."
THAT--THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. FRYING THAT IMPLANT SHOULD HAVE KILLED HER. OVERLOADED HER BRAIN.
SHE SHOULD BE A VEGETABLE RIGHT NOW!
YOU'VE KILLED US ALL, YOU FOOL.
SEND IN MY PERSONAL SECURITY TEAM.
NO. TO THE HOUSE.
MY TEAM WILL BUY YOU TIME...KNOWING BLACK WIDOW, IT WILL BE A FEW MINUTES AT BEST. BUT AFTER THAT, EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF.
I'D SUGGEST DISAPPEARING FOREVER. I'D WISH YOU LUCK, BUT IF SHE'S COMING AFTER YOU THEN SHE DOESN'T HAVE ME. SO... GOODBYE.


VIPER. YOU'RE *MADAME HYDRA*. YOU CAN'T EXACTLY DISAPPEAR INTO WITNESS PROTECTION.
OUR BEST HOPE IS TO STICK TOGETHER.
STICK TOGETHER AND THEN WHAT?
STICK TOGETHER AND THEN *KILL HER*.
DAMMIT.
OH, SO NOW YOU *LIKE* THE "KILL HER" PLAN, SNAPDRAON?!
ONLY BECAUSE *YOU* PUSHED US INTO THIS CORNER, WEEPING LION. BUT NOW THAT I'M HERE I'M NOT RUNNING. I'M NOT *HIDING*.
WHO'S WITH ME?
WHO WANTS TO FINALLY #$@%&# KILL THE BLACK WIDOW?

CREEEAK
JAMES. I WILL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING SOON. BUT WE ARE STILL IN DANGER.
I CAN GET US OUT OF HERE, BUT YOU MUST DO EVERYTHING I SAY EXACTLY AS I SAY IT. UNDERSTAND?
...YES.
I LOVE YOU.

STAY LOW. WHEN I SAY YOUR NAME, THAT'S WHEN YOU COME OUT.
OKAY.
IF--IF THEY'RE IN THE HOUSE...SHOULD WE TRY TO GO OUT THE WINDOW?
NO, THEY'LL BE READY FOR THAT, WE'LL BE TOO EXPOSED. THIS IS BEST.
I NEED YOU TO TRUST ME. NO HESITATION.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET YOU BOTH OUT OF HERE ALIVE.
AND YOU.
...YES. ME TOO.
HERE WE GO.
SHHHAFFFT
?!
KRAK

MMMPPH!
THWACK
AIIIIEEEE!
SNAP
KRAK
BLAM
BLAM
CACK!

AHHH!
BLAM BLAM
SLAM
BLAM BLAM BLAM
KRAK
BLAM
THUNK
WHAMMO

IT'S OKAY, BUDDY. YOU'RE OKAY.
KRAK
...HELEN?!
ACTUALLY, IT'S *YELENA*. I'M NOT SO MUCH A BABYSITTER AS AN OLD FRIEND OF...NATALIE'S.
AND WE NEED TO MOVE.
I... OKAY. SHE SAID TO WAIT HERE.
YES, BUT NOW YOU HAVE BACKUP. IT'S NOT SAFE HERE.
SHOULD WE TRY TO GET TO THE CAR?
NO. THOSE VEHICLES ARE BURNED.
I'VE DISABLED THE EXTERIOR CAMERAS AND HAVE A CLEAN CAR AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL.
...THANK YOU.
YOU WOULD DO IT FOR ME.
YES.
ENOUGH MUSHY STUFF. WE MUST MOVE.

SOMEWHERE IN SAN FRANCISCO.
YELENA, CHECK THE BACK.
THIS IS AN OLD SAFE HOUSE OF MINE. STAY HERE WHILE WE MAKE SURE IT'S SECURE.
HE'S ASLEEP... CAN YOU TAKE HIM FOR ME?
BACK IS SECURE...BUT I DON'T LIKE IT. HARD TO DEFEND.
I KNOW. WE'LL MOVE ON AS SOON AS WE CAN.
I NEED YOU TO CALL--
ALREADY DONE. THEY'RE EN ROUTE.
...THANK YOU.
NAT, I'M NOT TRYING TO COMPLAIN, BUT THIS PLACE IS A NIGHTMARE FOR STEVIE.
I KNOW. WE WON'T STAY LONG. I HAVEN'T "WORKED" IN SAN FRANCISCO FOR A LONG TIME--OUR OPTIONS ARE LIMITED.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S STILL ASLEEP.
HE'S HAD A HARD DAY.
THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT.
I NEED TO KNOW, NAT. I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO US.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.
...YES. I WILL TELL YOU WHAT I KNOW.

"MY NAME IS NOT NATALIE GREY, IT'S NATASHA ROMANOFF, AND I AM THE BLACK WIDOW.
"I WAS ABDUCTED IN MANHATTAN ABOUT FOURTEEN WEEKS AGO.
"I DIDN'T SEE WHO HIT ME WITH THE TRANQUILIZERS...
"...OR WHO LET ME FALL.

"BUT I DID SEE WHO CAUGHT ME.
HIT HER WITH THE SERUM.
BUT MADAME HYDRA, WE ALREADY HIT HER WITH ENOUGH TRANQS TO TAKE DOWN A DOZEN MEN!
IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW DANGEROUS SHE IS, I CAN'T USE YOU.
AIIIIEEEE!
INJECT HER. NOW!
YES, MADAME HYDRA.
PACKAGE SECURE. PROCEED TO PHASE TWO.

"I WOKE UP BRIEFLY IN A LAB, STRAPPED TO A TABLE.
"IT WAS HYDRA THAT KIDNAPPED ME, BUT I SAW NO IDENTIFYING MARKS IN THE LAB. SO IT COULD HAVE BEEN A HYDRA LAB...OR A.I.M.... OR ANYONE'S REALLY.
"YOU WERE ALREADY THERE, JAMES, STRAPPED NEXT TO ME, SO I CANNOT KNOW EXACTLY WHEN YOU WERE TAKEN.
"THIS IS THE TIME WE CALL 'FRANCE.'
50
97
"WORKING BACKWARD, I BELIEVE WE MUST HAVE BEEN THERE FOR AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS.
"EVERYTHING WE REMEMBER FROM BEFORE SAN FRANCISCO IS THE PRODUCT OF IMPLANTS OR BRAINWASHING OF SOME KIND.
"THEY BUILT BEAUTIFUL LIVES FOR US...NEARLY PERFECT. AND BEAUTIFUL FICTIONAL PASTS CAME WITH THAT.

"AND THEY MADE STEVIE FROM US.
"HE MAY NOT HAVE COME TO US NATURALLY, AS WE REMEMBER IT, BUT HE IS OUR BOY THROUGH AND THROUGH. YOURS AND MINE.
"HE'S ME...A BIZARRE HOUDINI WHO CAN ESCAPE ANYTHING AND GETS IN LOADS OF REDHEADED TROUBLE.
"HE'S YOU...YOUR GOOFY SENSE OF HUMOR, YOUR EYES, YOUR NOSE... YOUR LAUGH.
PIZZA
"*CALIFORNIA*. THAT'S THE MARKER. THAT'S WHEN WE WERE OUT ON OUR OWN...MAKING OUR OWN DECISIONS. EVERYTHING WE REMEMBER BEFORE THAT IS FICTION.
"EVERYTHING AFTER THAT IS REAL.
"WE WERE BEING WATCHED... MONITORED...BUT IT WAS US. *IT WAS REAL*.

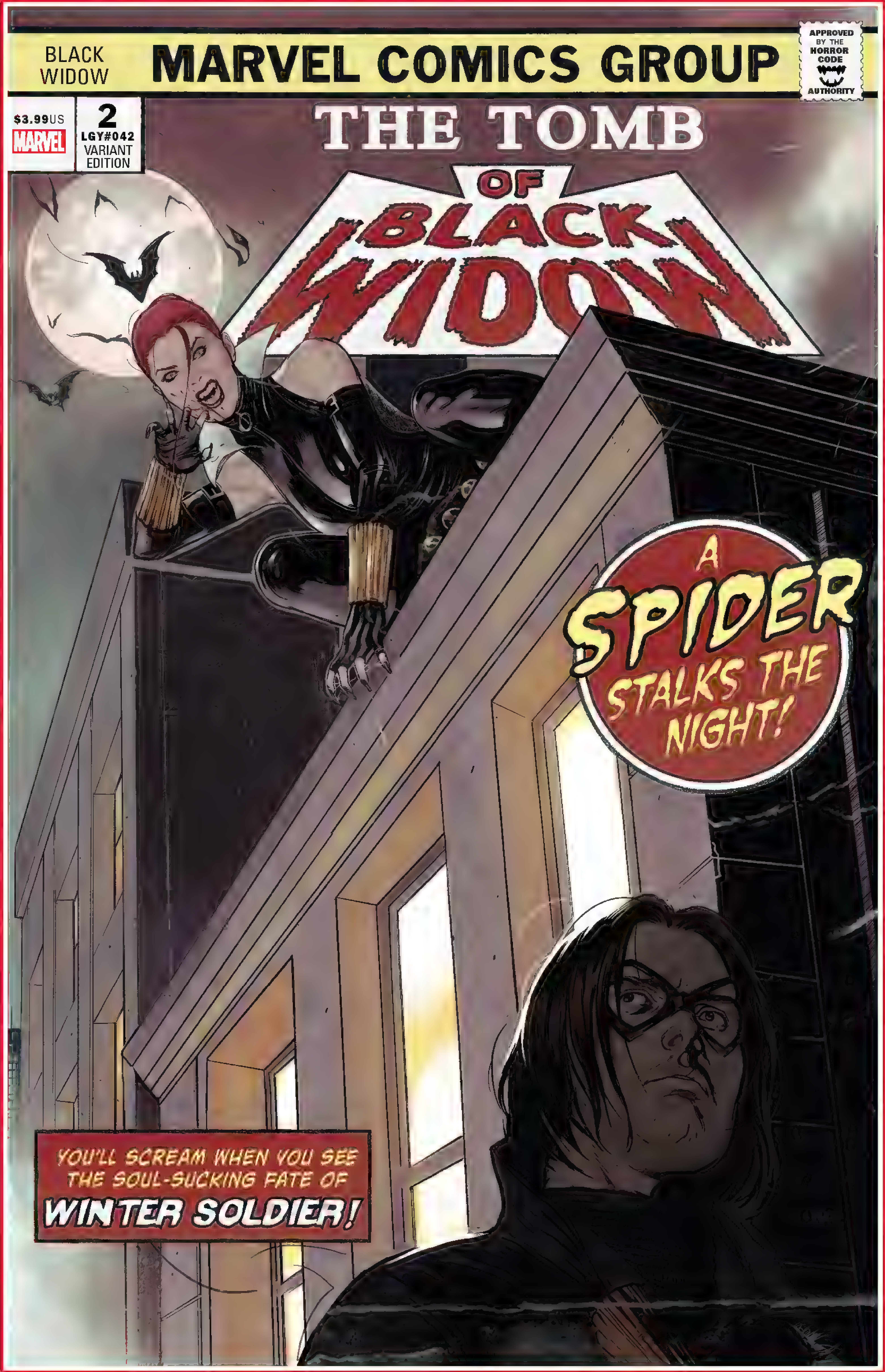
"AS FOR THE PEOPLE WHO DID THIS... I HAVE NO REAL ANSWER. YET.
"ONLY VIPER AND HYDRA ARE FOR CERTAIN AT THIS TIME, BUT...
"...IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE SHE WAS ACTING ALONE.
"THE LIST OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO TAKE ME OFF THE TABLE IS...LONG.
"COULD BE ANY OF THEM.
"COULD BE ALL OF THEM."

I...I AM SO SORRY, JAMES. IT'S MY FAULT YOU HAVE COME TO THIS.
NAT...DON'T SAY THAT. I LOVE YOU AND STEVIE MORE THAN ANYTHING. YOU'RE ALL THAT MATTERS.
I KNOW. I KNOW BECAUSE I FEEL THE SAME WAY. AND IT'S...IT'S GOING TO MAKE WHAT I HAVE TO SAY NEXT VERY HARD.
THEN DON'T SAY IT.
I HAVE TO.
IF YOU LOVE STEVIE THE WAY I DO, AND I KNOW YOU DO, THEN YOU WOULD NEVER WANT TO BE SEPARATED FROM HIM.
YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING TO... TO RAISE HIM, TO KEEP HIM SAFE.
YES.
AND THAT MEANS YOU HAVE TO LEAVE ME. YOU HAVE TO LEAVE ME AND NEVER LOOK BACK. WITH ME YOU WILL ALWAYS BE MARKED, NEVER SAFE.
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT.
...BUT I CAN'T.
WE HAVEN'T A LOT OF TIME, JAMES.
I HAVE TO SAY SOME THINGS THAT WILL HURT... PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR BEING SO DIRECT AND... INSENSITIVE.
I...I HAVE TO KNOW IF YOU WANT TO KEEP STEVIE.
WHAT?!
I KNOW. I'M SORRY... BUT I HAVE TO ASK, BECAUSE IF YOU WANT TO TRY TO RETURN TO YOUR OLD LIFE...
...IF YOU WANT TO WALK AWAY...
...I'LL UNDERSTAND AND I CAN HELP YOU DO THAT--
NO. HE'S MY SON. I... I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD EVEN ASK ME--
I KNOW. BUT I HAD TO ASK BECAUSE THE NEXT PART IS EVEN HARDER.

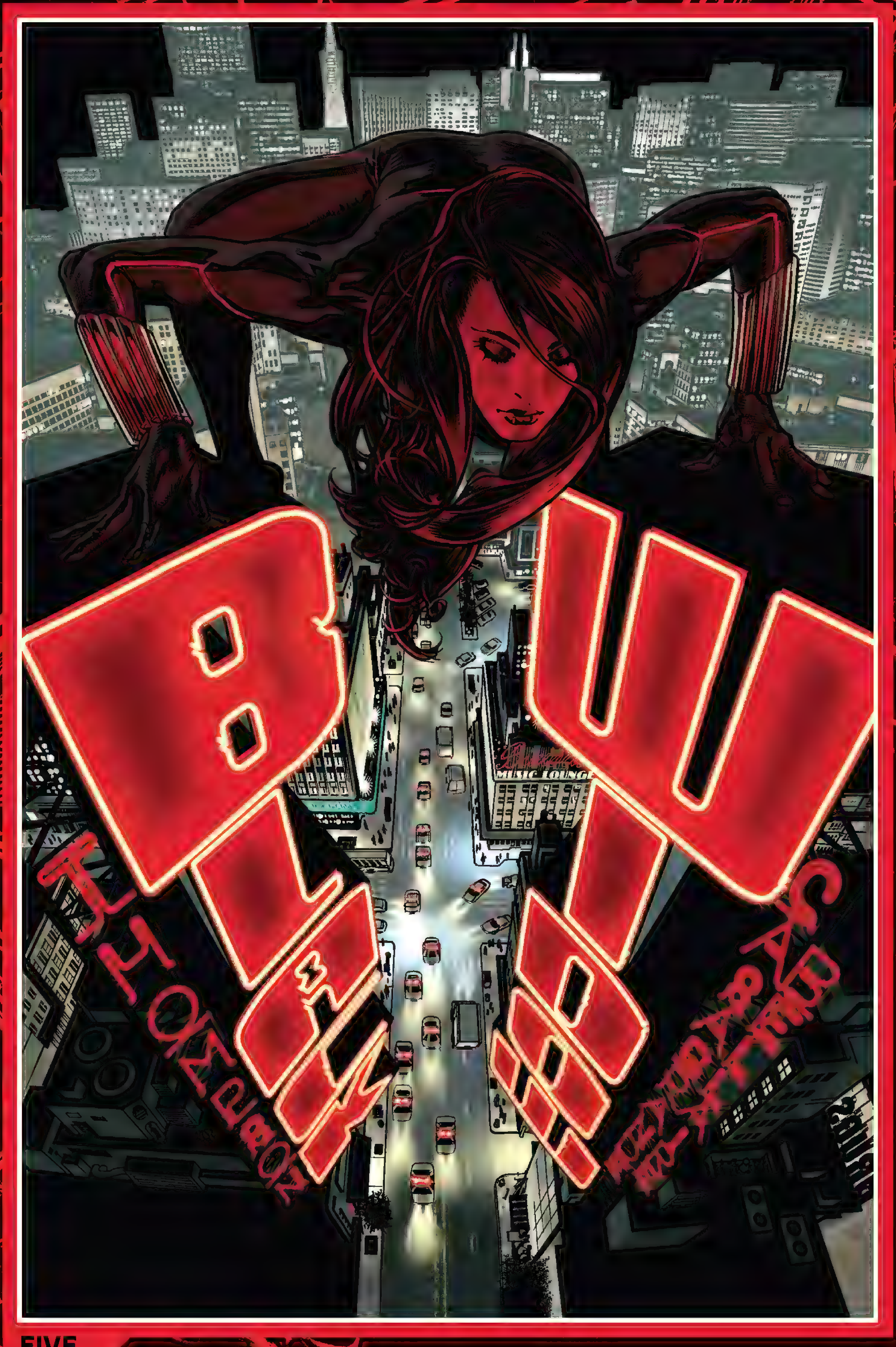
YOU CAN'T EVER SEE ME AGAIN. YOU CAN'T EVEN TALK ABOUT ME, TO HIM OR ANYONE. I HAVE TO BE WORSE THAN DEAD TO YOU. I HAVE TO HAVE NEVER EXISTED.
I...I CAN'T DO THAT, NAT.
YOU CAN. YOU CAN BECAUSE THAT'S HOW WE KEEP STEVIE SAFE.
THESE PEOPLE WILL NEVER STOP, JAMES. *NEVER.* NOT IF THEY KNOW YOU'RE MINE.
BUT IF YOU'RE NOBODY... IF YOU'RE NOBODY, YOU AND STEVIE CAN HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LIFE TOGETHER, AND THAT... THAT WILL HAVE TO BE ENOUGH FOR US BOTH.
THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY...
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, THERE IS NOT.
=COUGH=
JAMES... I--I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET TWO VERY OLD FRIENDS OF MINE...HAWKEYE AND WINTER SOLDIER.
...
HI.
WE'RE NOT *THAT* OLD.
GUYS, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY JAMES AND STEVIE.
MOMMA.

HOURS LATER.
RIGHT, BUT IF WE PLACE THE CHARGES HERE I THINK YOU GET MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK.
CAN YOU HIT THEM FROM THAT ANGLE?
CAN I *HIT* THEM?! DID YOU JUST ASK ME THAT? SERIOUSLY?
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS?
LIKE WHAT?!
DEFENSIVE AND YOU KNOW... LIKE *YOU.*
BOYS, BOYS. YOU ARE BOTH VERY ANNOYING. BE MORE QUIET PLEASE.
HE'S WIPED.
YEAH. HE'S OUT AGAIN. BUT I THINK...
...IT'S TOO DANGEROUS IN HERE AND HE'S TOO SNEAKY, YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY WITH HIM, IS THAT OKAY?
YEAH, TO BE HONEST, I'M WIPED TOO. CAN YOU SIT WITH US FOR JUST A MINUTE?
...OF COURSE.
EVEN THOUGH THIS IS A NIGHTMARE... I'M GLAD I GOT TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS, NAT. YOU'RE INCREDIBLE. WE WERE LUCKY TO HAVE YOU FOR EVEN A MOMENT.
I WAS THE LUCKY ONE.
ON MY MARK...

...TAKING THEM OUT.
MARK.
BOOM


BLACK WIDOW
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE HORROR CODE AUTHORITY
$3.99US
MARVEL
2
LGY#042
VARIANT EDITION
THE TOMB OF BLACK WIDOW
A SPIDER STALKS THE NIGHT!
YOU'LL SCREAM WHEN YOU SEE THE SOUL-SUCKING FATE OF WINTER SOLDIER!

#2 HORROR VARIANT BY **JOSHUA "SWAY" SWABY**


BW
MUSIC LOUNGE

FIVE

OH, YOU'RE SHY NOW? SINCE WHEN IS MY BOY SO SHY?
TOO BIG.
SHE'S BIG BUT GENTLE. SEE?
ARF! ARF!
ARF!
BE CAREFUL OR YOU'LL GET THROWN A FISH, BUDDY.
THAT WOULD BE RAD.
IS THAT REALLY ANOTHER SMELL WE NEED IN OUR LIFE?
GOOD POINT.
FAST!
IT IS.
MORE FAST!
=HEH=
WELL THAT APPLE DIDN'T FALL FAR FROM THE TREE.
WILL YOU THINK I'M A TERRIBLE FATHER IF I SAY THE ZOO CAGES HAVE BEEN GIVING ME IDEAS ALL DAY ABOUT HOW TO CONTAIN STEVIE AT HOME?
ONLY IF YOU DON'T THINK I'M A BAD MOTHER FOR ASKING ONE OF THE EMPLOYEES HOW MUCH THE SMALLER CAGES COST.
HAHAHA.

NAT.
A WAREHOUSE SOMEWHERE IN SAN FRANCISCO.
NATASHA. WE HAVE TO MOVE.
WE HAVE NO TIME FOR YOUR SOFT TOUCH, WINTER SOLDIER.
SLAP
WHAT THE HELL, YELENA?!
NATALIA!
NATALIA. PEOPLE ARE COMING TO KILL US. WE MUST KILL THEM INSTEAD.
YOU MUST PUT ASIDE YOUR GRIEF AND MOVE.
THERE WILL BE TIME FOR GRIEF LATER. I PROMISE YOU.
IT IS NOT GOING ANYWHERE ANYTIME SOON.

I HEARD YOU.
THEN *MOVE.*
THIS WAS A BAD IDEA.
IT'S...IT'S GOING TO WORK. IT HAS TO.

YOU HERE WITH ME?
...YES.
I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO.
CLICK
THE CLICK OF THIS DOOR CLOSING IS THE DARKEST SOUND I HAVE EVER HEARD. IT MIGHT AS WELL BE THE SOUND OF MY HEART TURNING TO DUST.
IT'S THE SOUND OF DREAMS DYING.
A DREAM I NEVER EVEN IMAGINED I COULD HAVE.
NEVER KNEW HOW MUCH I COULD LOVE.
NAT...MAYBE THIS, MAYBE THIS IS A MISTAKE--
NO. IT'S THE ONLY WAY. IS EVERYONE IN POSITION?
...YES.

WEEPING LION, DO YOU HAVE A VISUAL?
WE HAVE VISUAL BUT NO SHOT. THEY'VE LEFT THE INITIAL AREA.
CONFIRMING THREE TARGETS IN THE STAIRWELL BUT NO SHOT, WE REPEAT **NO SHOT.**
WHO'S MISSING?
WINTER SOLDIER.
WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.
KEEP IT TOGETHER, VIPER. THEY'RE STILL INSIDE THE BUILDING. THEY'VE GOT NOWHERE TO RUN.
IT'S INSANE TO ME THAT YOU THINK THE DAMN **BLACK WIDOW** HAS ANY INTENTION OF RUNNING AFTER WE **MURDERED HER FAMILY.**
YOU GAVE ME THE GO-AHEAD.
ONLY AFTER YOU PUSHED US INTO THIS CORNER, YOU FOOL.
PLAN A IS BLOWN, MOVING TO PLAN B. ARCADE, KILL POWER TO THE BUILDING.
SNAPDRAGON AND **RED GUARDIAN,** YOU'RE ON.
COPY THAT.
WE'RE ON.
PLAN A WAS ALWAYS NONSENSE.
AGREED. I ALWAYS PREFER A PLAN B.
POWER CUT IN...THREE, TWO, ONE, **CUT.**

SMASH
HUH. YOU GET THE FEELING THAT DESPITE EVERYTHING, WE'RE BEING DRAWN INTO *HER* TRAP, RATHER THAN US DRAWING HER INTO *OURS?*
IF YOU ARE JUST GETTING THAT, SNAPDRAGON, I AM AFRAID YOU WILL NOT LAST LONG.

NOW, PLEASE.
COPY.
OH #$%£.
BOOM
≈HNGGGG≈ WE'RE HIT. ≈KOFF≈ VISUAL CONFIRMATION ON WIDOW, HAWKEYE AND YELENA BELOVA... N-NO EYES ON WINTER SOLDIER. REPEAT, NO EYES ON WINTER SOLDIER.
≈KOFF≈ S-SEND THE CANNON FODDER.
EN ROUTE.

WE HAVE EYES ON HAWKEYE.
WE'VE GOT THE SHOT.
AIIIIIIEEEEEEEE!
WEEPING LION IS OUT.
WHAM
SWISH

BLAM
ARRGGGHH!
YOU SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT A GUN.
BLAM
I BROUGHT MORE THAN ENOUGH GUNS, WIDOW.
NO--
HNNNG!
ALEXEI?!
CRUNCH
UNNNNG!
<I WAS NEVER WITH THEM, NATALIA. THEY APPROACHED ME, I KNEW THEY WERE GOING TO PROCEED WITH OR WITHOUT ME, I KNEW I COULD BETTER PROTECT YOU IF I WAS ON THE INSIDE.>*
<I HAD NO IDEA...NO IDEA THE LENGTHS TO WHICH THEY WOULD GO. I AM SO SORRY, NATALIA.>
<I...BELIEVE YOU, ALEXEI. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THIS IS OVER BETWEEN US. LEAVE NOW, BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND.>
<AND KNOW THAT WE WILL SPEAK AGAIN SOON.>
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.

WATCH YOUR SIX, NAT.

NOW.
FWOOT
FWOOT
DO IT.

I WILL LEAVE YOU TWO NOW, NATALIA. BUT I WISH TO SAY...I AM DEEPLY SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.
...THANK YOU.
CLINT... WHAT'S WRONG?
TALK TO ME.
...NOTHING
NO. IT'S TOTALLY INAPPROPRIATE.
WELL, NOW YOU HAVE TO SAY IT.
IT...IT HURT MY FEELINGS THAT I WASN'T A PART OF YOUR PERFECT LIFE.
HUH?
"JAMES," "STEVE," EVEN THE DAMN CAT WAS NAMED "LOGAN."
CLINT. I DIDN'T NAME THEM. THE PEOPLE THAT DID THIS TO ME NAMED THEM.
OH.
BUT I APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENT.
I'M SORRY, NAT. I'M JUST SO, SO SORRY.
I KNOW.
LET... LET ME STAY WITH YOU? I COULD KEEP YOU COMPANY... I PROMISE I CAN BE QUIET IF THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED...
NO, YOU CAN'T.
NO, I CAN'T.
AND THAT'S ONE OF MANY REASONS WHY I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU. BUT I NEED TO BE ALONE.
OKAY. YOU KNOW WHERE I AM IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.
ALWAYS.

ANOTHER SAFE HOUSE SOMEWHERE IN SAN FRANCISCO.
CLICK
IT'S JUST ME.
TELL ME.
IT'S DONE. *THEY'RE SAFE.*
DON'T TELL ME WHERE. NOT EVEN--
I KNOW.
EVEN THE SCENE--THE MACHINE WE USED TO PROJECT THE HOLOGRAM?
IT'S ASH.
AND EVERYTHING ELSE...THE MONEY IS HANDLED AND THEY'RE SOMEWHERE BEAUTIFUL...AND THEY'RE...THEY'RE BRAND-NEW. CLEAN SLATES. BRIGHT FUTURES.
YES. ALL OF IT. EXACTLY AS YOU SAID.
AFTER TODAY WE NEVER SPEAK OF THEM AGAIN, UNDERSTAND?
I KNOW.
...THANK YOU.

I'M SORRY IT HAD TO BE YOU, JAMES. YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE I COULD TRUST TO DO THIS.
...I'M GLAD I WAS HERE.
BUT YOU'RE ANGRY I ASKED.
NO.
YOU WORRY WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU AND ME.
...YES. I'M SORRY IF THAT'S SELFISH, ESPECIALLY RIGHT NOW. BUT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I... WHEN I CLING TO THE HOPE THAT SOMEDAY YOU AND I--
I KNOW. ME TOO.
BUT NOW...
BUT NOW YOU FEAR THEY'LL ALWAYS BE BETWEEN US.
...YES. I'M SORRY.
DON'T BE SORRY. YOU'RE NOT WRONG.
THEY DIDN'T GIVE HIM THAT NAME BY ACCIDENT, JAMES. THEY KNEW IT WOULD ONLY HELP ME FEEL MORE AT HOME WITH HIM. AND NOW...I DON'T KNOW.
MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL FEEL DIFFERENTLY ABOUT US, ABOUT EVERYTHING. BUT RIGHT NOW ALL I CAN SEE IS *THEM*...THAT I HAVE *LOST* THEM FOREVER.
BUT THEY'RE NOT DEAD, NAT.
ALL I CAN FEEL ARE THEIR DEATHS.
AND THAT IN SOME TWISTED WAY *YOU* TOOK THEM FROM ME, EVEN THOUGH IT'S WHAT I DEMANDED OF YOU.
BUT THEY ARE FOR *ME*.
JAMES, TH-THERE'S AN ACHE INSIDE ME THAT I HAVE NEVER FELT BEFORE.
IN ALL THE THINGS I HAVE BEEN THROUGH... THE HIGHS AND LOWS...THE PEAKS OF JOY AND THE DEPTHS OF SORROW...ALL THE PAIN AND REGRET...NOTHING HAS FELT AS EMPTY AS THIS ACHE. IT FEELS LIKE AN ENDLESS HOLE.
AND I CANNOT IMAGINE HOW SOMETHING SO DARK AND ENDLESS AND EMPTY COULD EVER BE FILLED.
YOU...YOU HAVE TO ALLOW YOURSELF TIME TO MOURN.
...

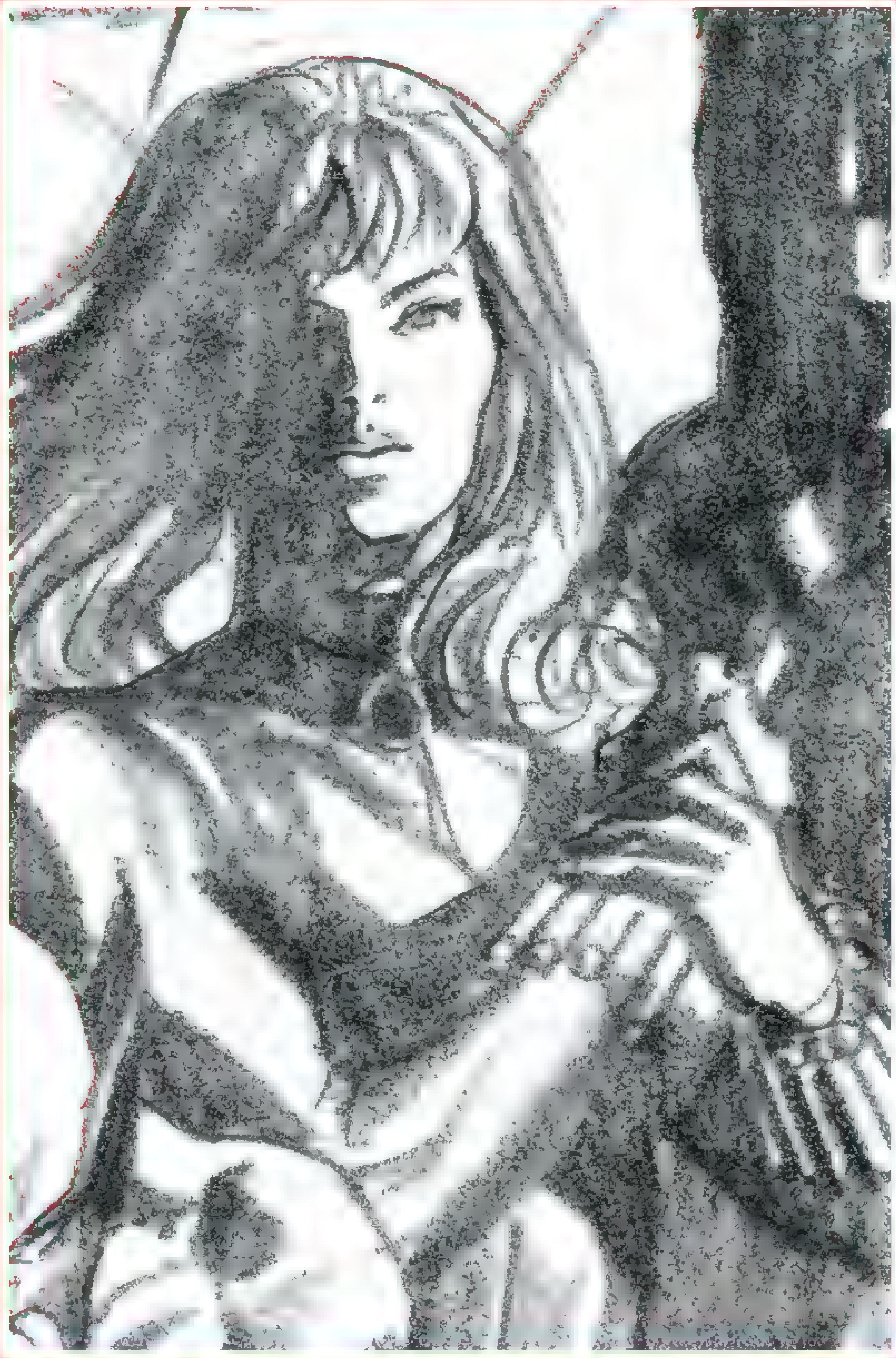
I... PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT. I'VE-- I'VE NEVER BEEN GREAT AT THAT... ALWAYS MOVING, LIKE A SHARK, THAT'S ME.
BUT NOTHING FEELS THE SAME ANYMORE. SO PERHAPS...
...PERHAPS THAT...
...HAS CHANGED TOO...
SHHH. I'VE GOT YOU.

DIDN'T WANT TO EVER COME BACK HERE.
FELT IT MIGHT UNSTITCH ME THE REST OF THE WAY.
NOT THAT THERE'S MUCH LEFT TO UNSTITCH, IF I'M HONEST.
BUT IN THE CHAOS, SOMETHING PRECIOUS GOT LEFT BEHIND.
AND I'VE HAD MY FILL OF LOSING THINGS PRECIOUS TO ME.
LOGAN... C'MERE, BABY. YOU HERE?
LOGAN?
CRINKLE
MEW
HI, BABY. YEAH, IT'S OKAY. I'M SO SORRY, I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED. IT'S OKAY NOW. COME ON OUT TO ME.
MURRRROW
I KNOW. BUT IT WILL BE OKAY. WE'RE GOING TO BE OKAY. WE WILL.

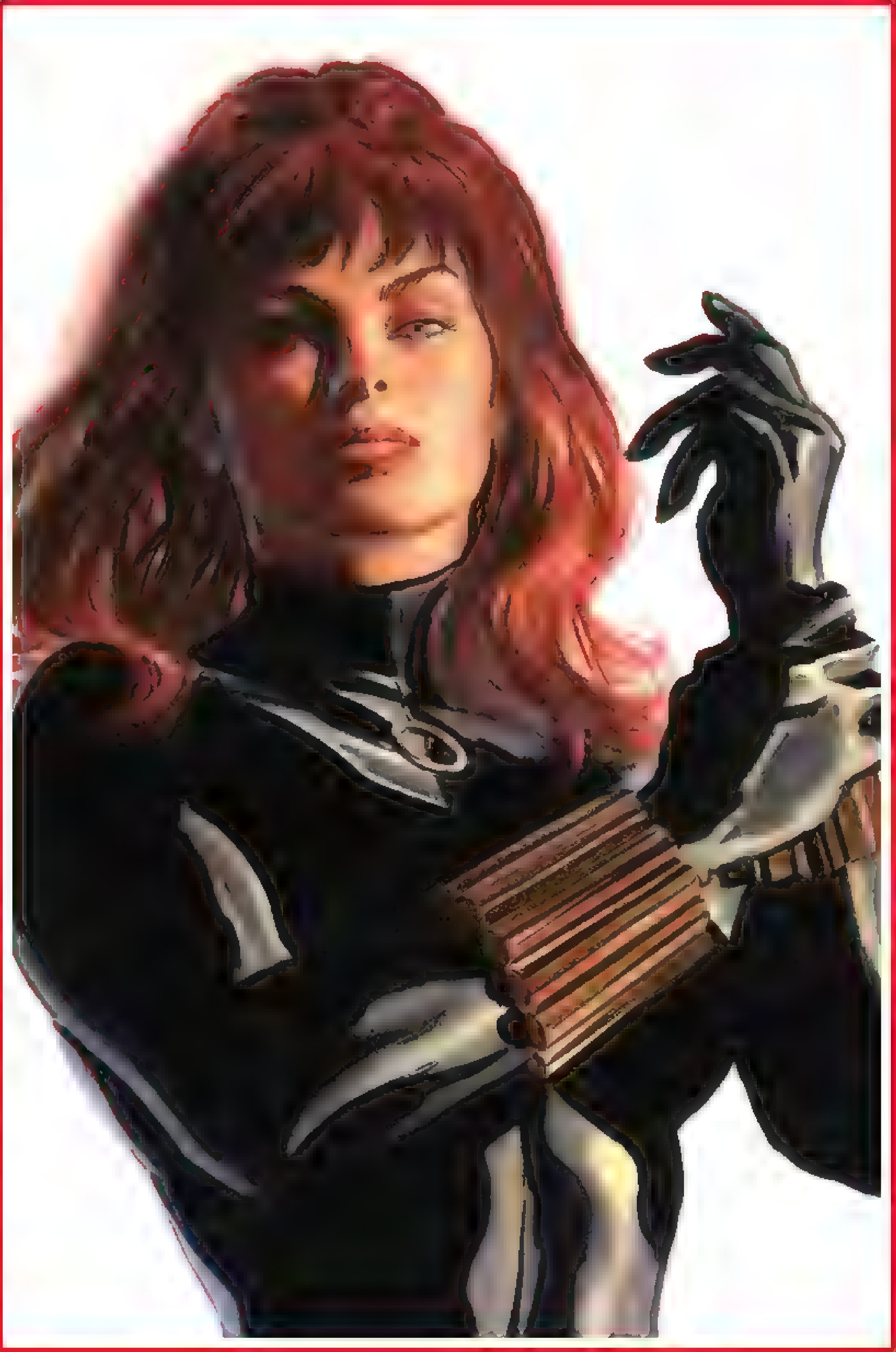
MOMENT TO MOMENT IS PURE HELL.
MY VEINS ON FIRE, MY BONES MADE OF NOTHING BUT SORROW. MY MIND DULL AS A RIVER STONE. MY HEART AN EMPTY HUSK, PUMPING AWAY POINTLESSLY.
SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST.
MOMMA?
BUT WHEN I CAN STEP OUT OF MYSELF FOR JUST A MOMENT...I CAN IMAGINE THEM SOMEWHERE, SAFE AND HAPPY. MAYBE EVEN WATCHING THE SAME SUNSET.
PURRRR
IN THOSE FLEETING SECONDS, THERE'S A FEELING OF... IF NOT HAPPINESS...
...THEN AT LEAST *PEACE.*
NOT ALL LOVE LOOKS THE SAME, STEVIE. THIS IS THE BEST WAY SHE CAN LOVE US. AND WE JUST HAVE TO HOLD ONTO THAT SACRIFICE... AND LIVE OUR BEST LIVES.

WEEKS LATER. SAN FRANCISCO.
WATCH OUT FOR THAT FIRST STEP. IT IS HARDEST.
YOU MEAN "DOOZY"--THE SAYING IS "WATCH OUT FOR THE FIRST STEP. IT'S A DOOZY."
THAT IS A DUMB-SOUNDING WORD. I LIKE MINE BETTER.
OF COURSE YOU DO.
MY SOURCES SAY SNAPDRAGON AND VIPER SURVIVED THE EXPLOSION.
THE NEW WEEPING LION--WHO APPEARS TO SOMEHOW BE THE COUSINS YOU KILLED MERGED INTO A NEW BODY--
--LOST HIS EYE BUT IS ALIVE.
THAT COWARD ARCADE LEFT BEFORE IT BEGAN.
YES, I HEARD THE SAME.
I'LL HELP YOU, NATALIA. WE CAN BREAK THEM... IT WON'T EVEN BE HARD.
NO. I'M DONE WITH REVENGE.
IT'S AN ENDLESS CIRCLE... A SNAKE EATING ITSELF. WHO WOULD IT BENEFIT? JAMES AND STEVIE? IT'S FAR TOO LATE FOR THAT.
IT IS A RISK TO NOT STRIKE BACK. OTHERS MAY THINK THEY CAN DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO YOU AGAIN.
I DOUBT THAT WILL BE THE STORY THAT'S TOLD. THEY KNOW THEY ARE MARKED. LET THEM WATCH THE DOOR FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.
SO IF NOT REVENGE, THEN WHAT?

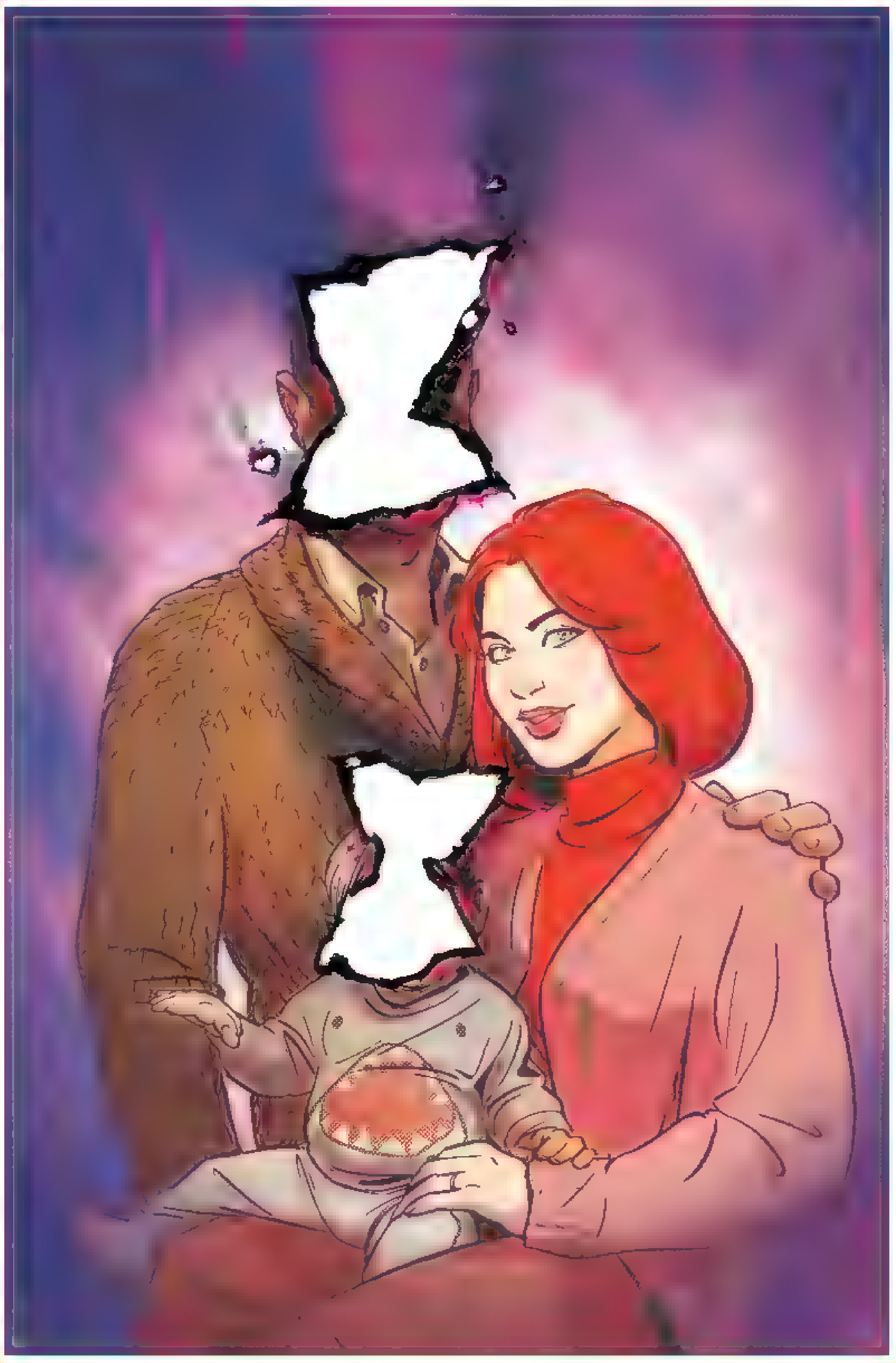
SOMETHING DIFFERENT.
SOMETHING JAMES AND STEVIE WOULD BE PROUD OF.
SOMETHING *I'LL* BE PROUD OF.
YOU CAN COME ALONG IF YOU LIKE. I COULD USE THE HELP... AND COMPANY.
GOOD. I'LL SEE YOU ON THE GROUND.
I THINK...I THINK I WOULD LIKE THAT.
I'VE REMADE MYSELF SO MANY TIMES. BUT NEVER QUITE LIKE THIS.
I BELIEVE IN IT.
I HAVE TO.



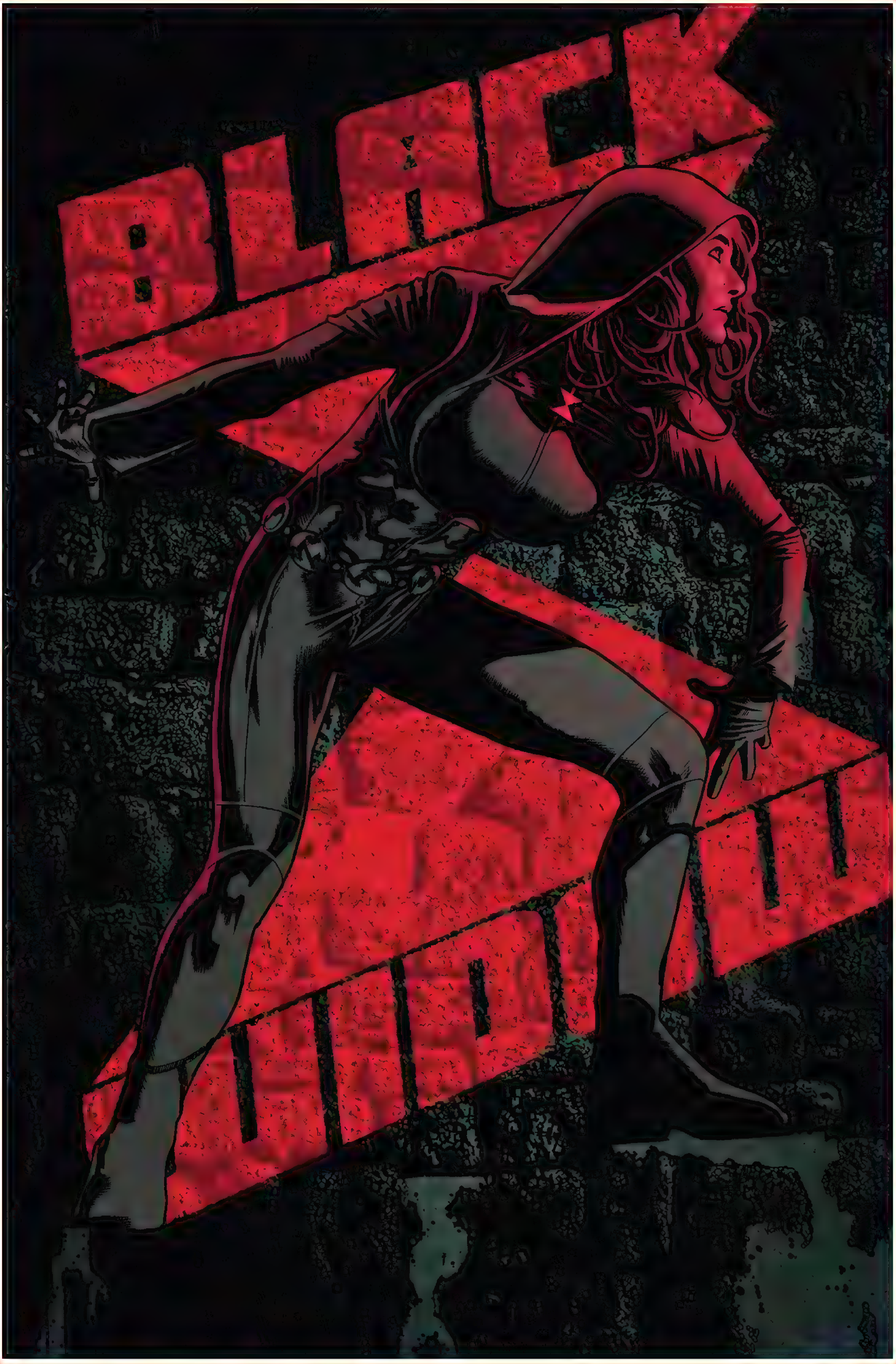
#2 TIMELESS SKETCH VARIANT BY **ALEX ROSS**



#2 TIMELESS VARIANT BY **ALEX ROSS**



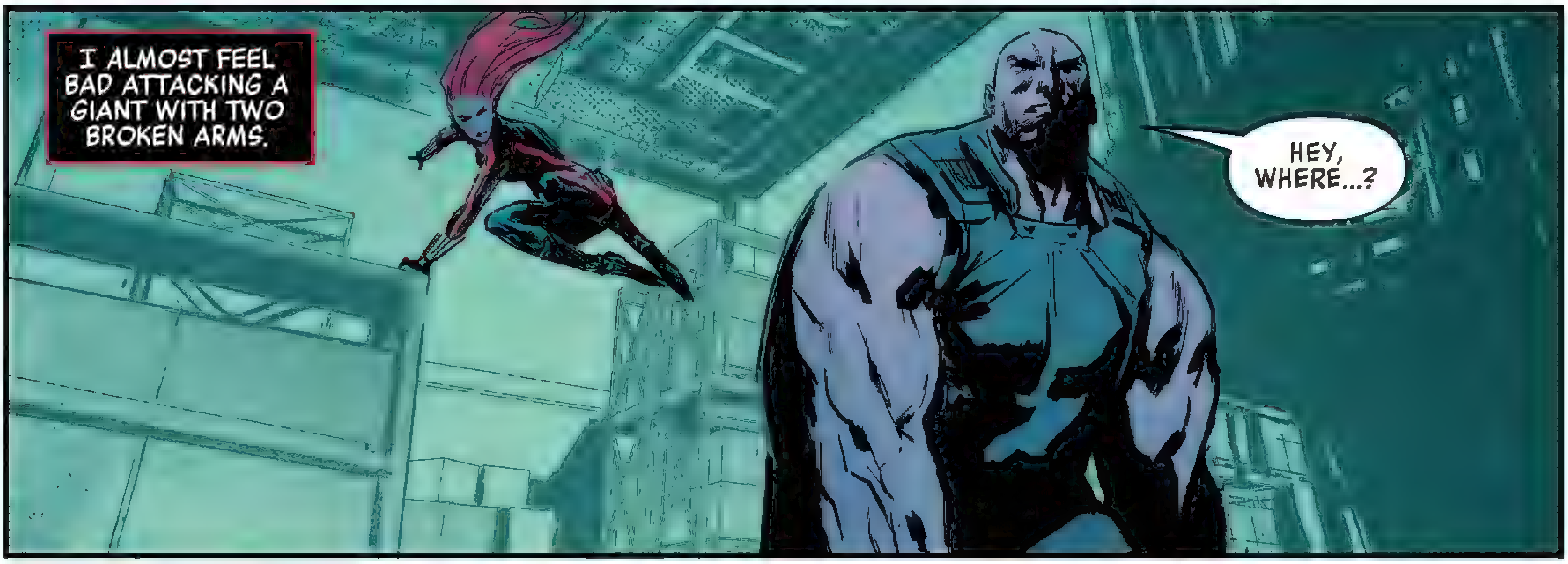
#3 VARIANT BY **ANNIE WU**

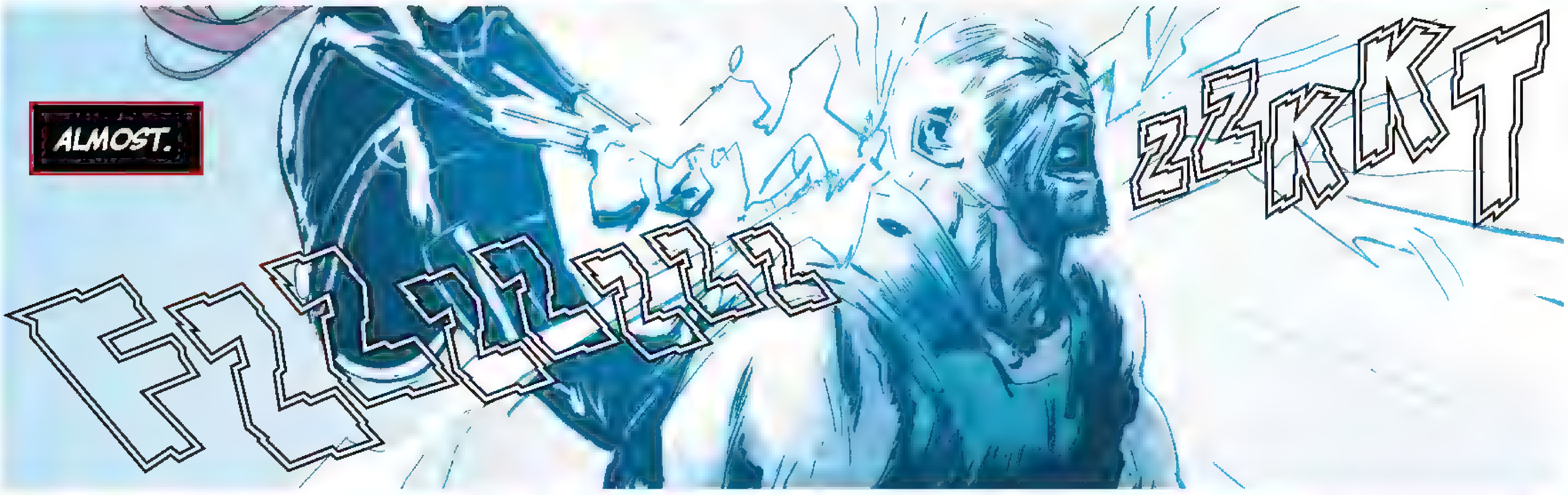

BLACK
WIDOW

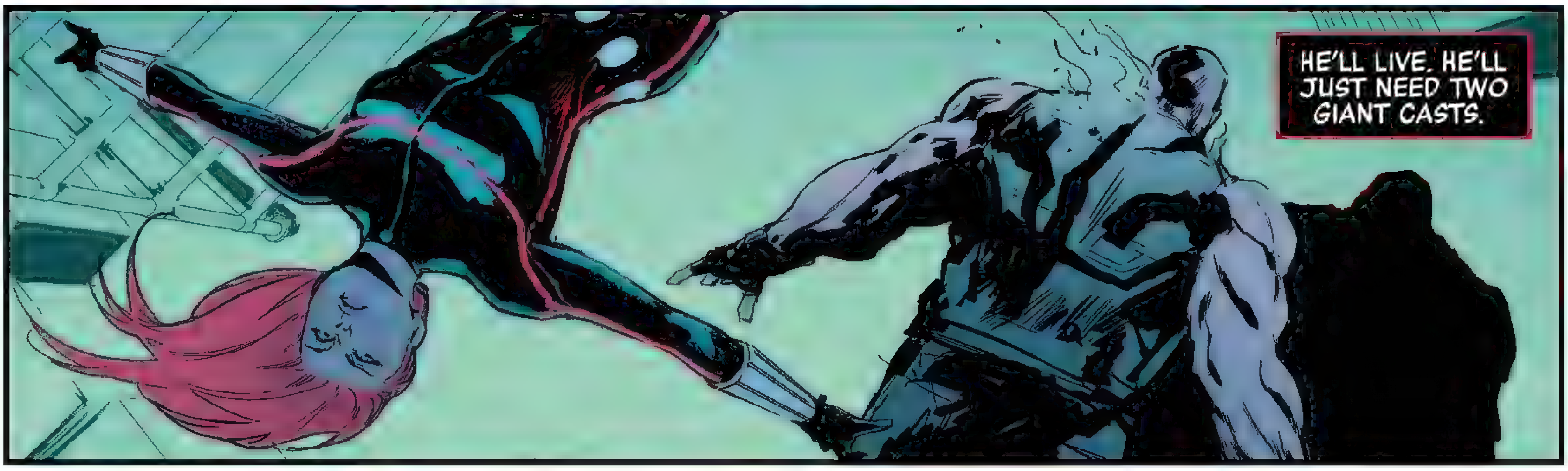
SIX

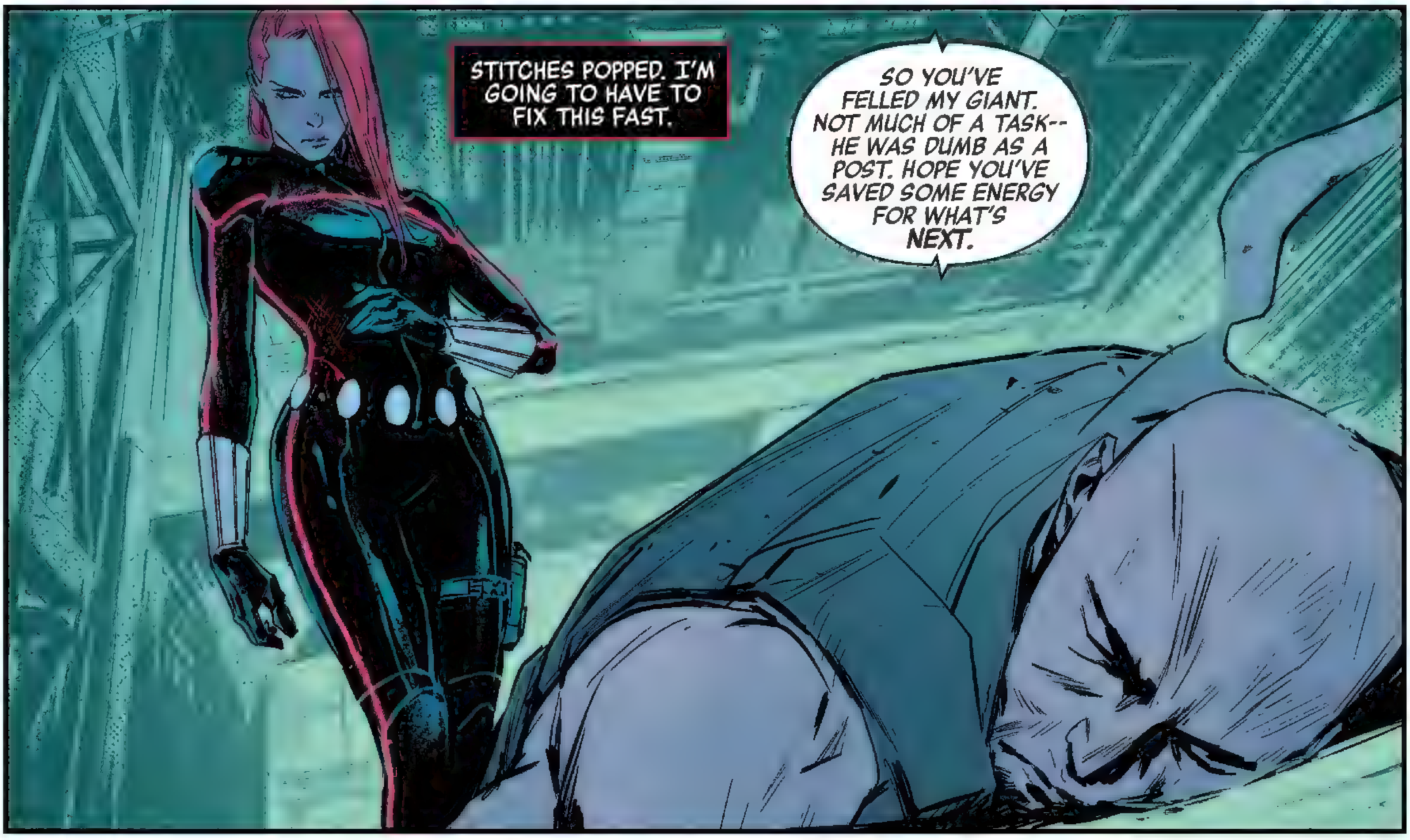
SOMEWHERE IN SAN FRANCISCO.
I EXPECTED SOME RESISTANCE, BUT NOT A *LITERAL* GIANT.
WHAMO
THE *APOGEE* SAYS YOU DIE, BLACK WIDOW, *SO YOU DIE.*
GONNA FEEL *THAT* TOMORROW.
THAT WAS LIKE GETTING HIT BY A FRYING PAN MOVING AT A SPEED NO FRYING PAN SHOULD EVER REACH.
THIS GUY HAS GOT LEGIT *SUPER-POWERS.* I MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE.
THONK

THEN AGAIN, SOME OF US HAVE "FRYING PAN HANDS," AND SOME OF US JUST FOUND A HAMMER.
ARRRRGHHHH!
WHAM
HEH. THAT WAS A MISTAKE.
WE'LL SEE.
BREAKING AN ARM THIS SIZE? YOU REALLY HAVE TO WANT IT.
I WANT IT.
AIIIIIEEEEEE!
KRAK


I ALMOST FEEL BAD ATTACKING A GIANT WITH TWO BROKEN ARMS.
HEY, WHERE...?


ALMOST.
FZZZZZZ
ZZKKT


HE'LL LIVE. HE'LL JUST NEED TWO GIANT CASTS.


STITCHES POPPED. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FIX THIS FAST.
SO YOU'VE FELLED MY GIANT. NOT MUCH OF A TASK-- HE WAS DUMB AS A POST. HOPE YOU'VE SAVED SOME ENERGY FOR WHAT'S NEXT.

SMASH
PHARMACY
I WOULD SAY YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR THE DESTRUCTION YOU'RE CAUSING, BUT YOU'LL BE DEAD BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OUT.
IF I HAD A NICKEL FOR EVERY TIME I'D HEARD THAT.
AND IT'S HARD TO GET MONEY FROM A CORPSE.
AHHH. DAMN.
DUCKY!
THAT'S RIGHT, STEVIE. DUCKY.

SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER MART, SIX DAYS AGO.
WHEN YOU'VE LIVED THE LIFE I'VE LIVED, YOU LEARN TO SPOT A SHARK IN THE WATER FAST.
EVEN A BABY SHARK STILL LEARNING WHAT IT CAN DO.
SHE'S MOVING TOO FAST.
SHE THINKS THAT'S HELPING HER, BUT IT'S ONLY DRAWING ATTENTION. AMATEUR.
RAW TALENT, BUT A LOT TO LEARN.
NICE TRY, BUT NO.
HEY!
UGH. I WORE THE WRONG SHOES FOR THIS NONSENSE.

SHE'S EVEN FASTER THAN I THOUGHT.
ANYONE WHO CAN MAKE ME DITCH MY SHOES IS WORTH CHASING.
AHHH!
CRASH
AHHH!
YOU'RE FAST.
MAYBE YOU'RE JUST SLOW.
I CAN TELL YOU FOR A *FACT* THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I SHOULD PROBABLY TELL YOU NOT TO STEAL WALLETS, BUT SINCE I SUSPECT THAT WILL FALL ON DEAF EARS, I'LL JUST TELL YOU TO PICK YOUR MARKS MORE CAREFULLY.
MARK? WHO TALKS LIKE THAT?
I HAVE LIVED A STRANGE AND INTERESTING LIFE.
YEAH, HOW ORIGINAL. YOU AND EVERYONE ELSE.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
MARIGOLD.
WELL, THAT'S A LIE.
NO $#@%, LADY. YOU THINK I'M TELLING YOU MY NAME?
FAIR ENOUGH.
TELL YOU WHAT--I'LL TRADE YOU MY WALLET FOR HOWEVER MANY YOU'RE HOLDING RIGHT NOW.
WHY WOULD I DO THAT?
SO THAT I LET YOU GO WITHOUT CALLING ANY COPS.
DAMMIT.
IT WON'T BE ENOUGH.
IT'S NOT SO BAD. MY WALLET MIGHT IMPRESS YOU.
FOR WHAT?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS. IT'S MY PROBLEM.
MAYBE I COULD HELP?
BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN SO HELPFUL SO FAR?

YOU DROPPED THESE.
THANKS.
AND YOU HAVE ALSO LOST YOUR SHOES.
I KNOW WHERE THEY ARE.
I SHOULD HOPE SO.
WAIT.
WHAT IS THIS, SOME KIND OF WELL-DRESSED KIDNAPPING?
MY WALLET. AS PROMISED.
TCHT.
YELENA. HUSH.
THIS GIRL CAN ACTUALLY GET OUT OF HERE--I SEE AT LEAST THREE EXIT STRATEGIES THAT DON'T INCLUDE RUSHING US. CURIOUS TO SEE IF SHE'LL GO FOR IT...
WHATEVER, LADY. YOU SUCK.
...AND HERE IT COMES.
INTERESTING.

LET HER GO.
YOU GAVE HER YOUR WALLET.
YOU HAVE BECOME TOO SOFT, NATALIA.
YES, PERHAPS. BUT ALSO THE WALLET HAS A **TRACKER** INSIDE.
TO WHAT END?
I'M NOT SURE YET. SEEMED TO ME LIKE SHE WAS REPORTING TO SOMEONE ELSE. SEEMED LIKE SHE MIGHT NEED HELP.
AND SHE'S TALENTED. SHE HAD SOME MOVES, YES?
RECRUITMENT.
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.
WHAT? WHAT AM I THINKING?
WELL, WHAT IF I AM? YOU ARE THE BLACK WIDOW, AND I AM THE WHITE WIDOW--TOGETHER WE ARE FORMIDABLE.
BUT YOUR PLANS ARE...***AMBITIOUS,*** NATALIA. WE MIGHT ***NEED*** SOME YOUNG TALENT.
NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT. WE WILL NOT BE BUILDING OUR OWN ***RED ROOM.***
OF COURSE NOT.
BUT OUR OWN ***NOT***-RED ROOM... PERHAPS.

NOW.
=BZZZT= WIDOW=BZZZT= BLACK WIDOW! CAN YOU--?
WHITE WIDOW. I THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU. APOGEE'S DONE SOMETHING TO MESS WITH THE SIGNAL.
I =BZZKT= THINK YOU =BZZKT=
DAMMIT.
STITCHING IS A BIT MESSY, BUT IT SHOULD HOLD... IF I DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT TEN MORE GIANTS.
AT LEAST TWENTY FLOORS BEFORE THE PENTHOUSE... IS THERE A GIANT WAITING FOR ME ON EACH ONE? LIKE SOME KIND OF TWISTED *VIDEO GAME*...? DEFEAT THE LEVELS IN ORDER TO GET TO THE BIG BOSS?
WAIT. IS MY *LIFE* BASICALLY A VIDEO GAME?
CREAK
APPARENTLY IF I DON'T GO UP, THEY JUST SEND THEM ON DOWN.
HEY, LADY. APOGEE SAYS YOU DIE--YOU LIKE IT FAST OR SLOW?
FWASSSSH
BIT OF BOTH, IF I'M HONEST. BUT NEITHER WITH *YOU*, I'M AFRAID.

SWWWWPPPPT
HI-TECH GRAPPLING HOOK. ULTIMATE CHEAT CODE.
LOOKS LIKE I'M STILL ONE LEVEL SHY OF *THE PENTHOUSE.*

ALSO, WITH THE ELEVATORS STILL DISABLED, I CAN HEAR ALL THOSE LOW-LEVEL BOSSES RUNNING UP THE STAIRS TO CONVERGE ON ME AT ONCE.
IF *THAT* DOESN'T STOP THEM, IT WILL AT LEAST BUY ME TIME.
CLICK
BOOM
COURSE, THERE'S ALWAYS BOUND TO BE A *STRAY* OR TWO.

WINGS. HUH. THESE MINI-BOSSES HAVE A WEIRD VARIETY OF POWER SETS.
FEELS LIKE A TWISTED ISLAND OF MISFIT TOYS. ALMOST MAKES ME LIKE THEM.
BUT AGAIN, THAT *ALMOST* IS THE KILLER.
CLICK
LET'S BIND YOUR FATES TOGETHER, GENTLEMEN.
THIS WILL BE MESSY.
NO.
YARGGH!
EEEEEE!

THEY HIT A LOWER FLOOR...THEY'LL LIVE, BUT THEY'RE OUT OF *THIS* FIGHT.
SSPINNNGG
SURPRISE, SURPRISE, THE PENTHOUSE LEVEL DOESN'T HAVE OPEN RAILINGS... IT'S NOT EXPOSED LIKE THE REST.
IT WILL TAKE SOMETHING STRONGER TO BREAK THROUGH HERE.
CLICK
HUH. SO THE *FINAL BOSS* NEEDS SOME HELP, DOES HE?
BOOM

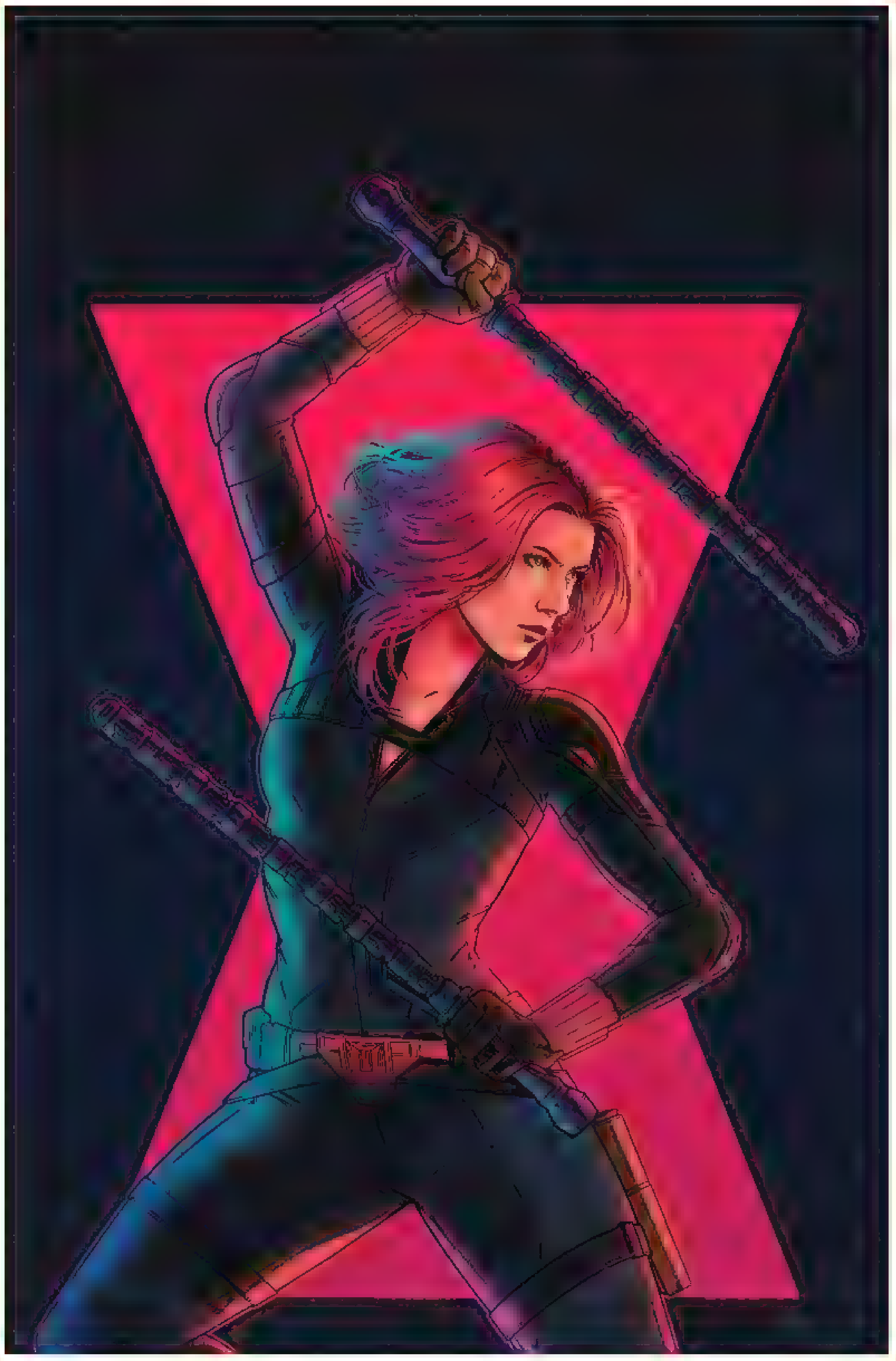
AHHHH! WHAT *IS* SHE?!?!
SHE'S THE ***BLACK WIDOW,*** YOU IDIOT!
KEEP IT TOGETHER! HIT HER WHEN SHE GETS TO THE OPENING!
FWISSH
IT'S GAS!
DON'T BREATHE IT IN!
IT'S ACTUALLY NOT GAS, JUST SMOKE. GIVES ME SOME ROOM TO MOVE.
AND IT'S ALSO FUN TO SEE THEM SCRAMBLE.
NOW LET'S GET STARTED IN EARNEST.

SMACK
SWORDS. COOL. I LIKE SWORDS TOO.
AIIIIIEEEE!
BIT CUMBERSOME, THOUGH. SMALL THROWING KNIVES ARE *ALSO* COOL.
LET'S SEE HOW *YOU* WORK AS A THROWING DEVICE.
HNNNG!
ARGGGGGH!
CRASH
FZZZZZZAK
BLARGHHAJKIJF--
SMASH

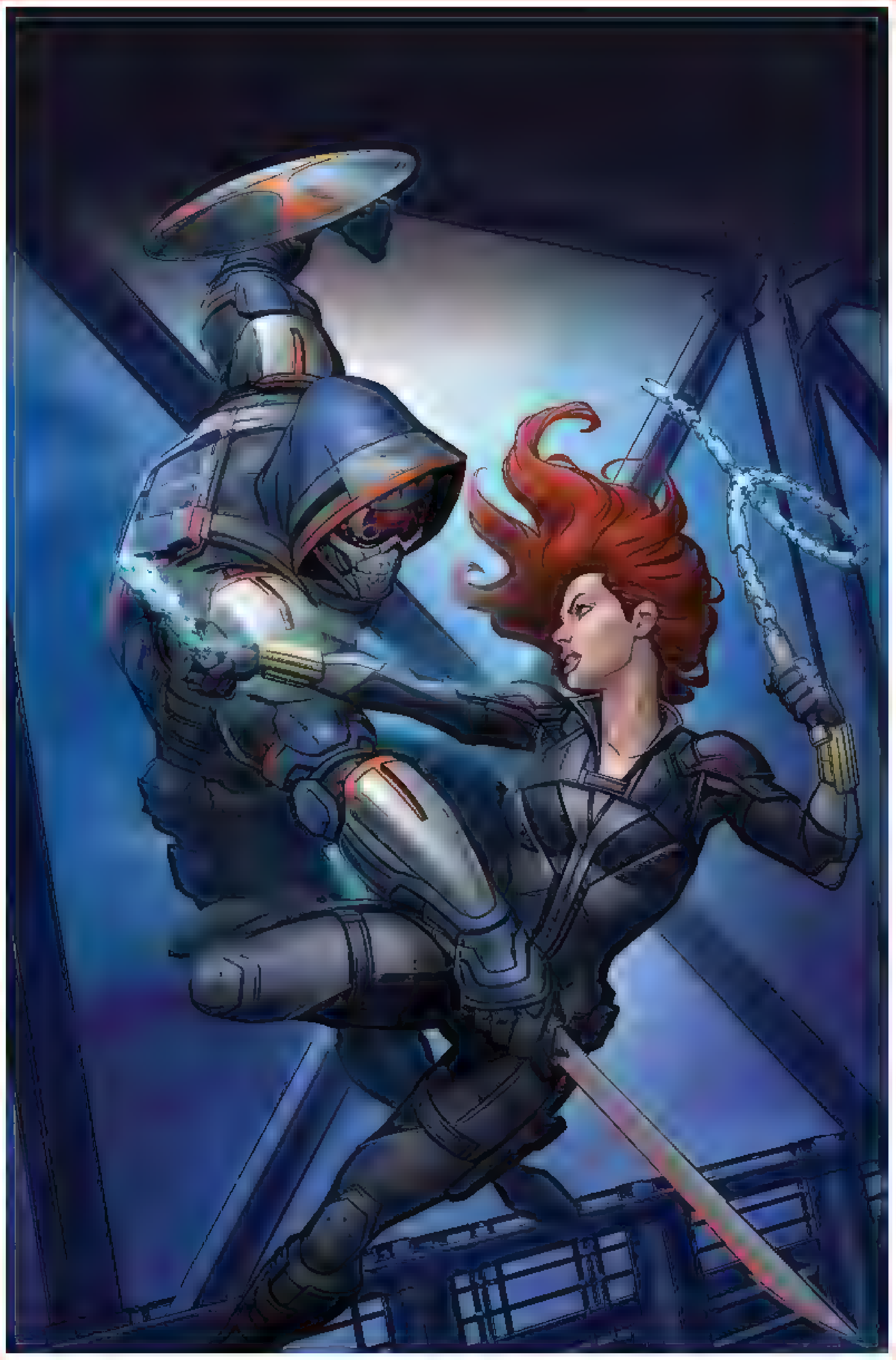
DAMN GIANTS.
I'LL LET YOUR STRANGE FRIEND HANDLE YOU.
FLIP
SQUIICKK
AIIIIIEEEE!
NICE WHEN THINGS WORK OUT SO EFFICIENTLY.
NOOOOO--
KRAK

AND THEN THERE WAS *ONE.*
YOU'RE *NOT* APOGEE.
...O-OF COURSE NOT. HE DOESN'T SHOW FOR THE LIKES OF *YOU.*
YOU... YOU'RE NOBODY. AND HE...*HE* IS EVERYTHING. THE PINNACLE, THE SUMMIT, THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE ACHIEVEMENT.
YEAH, I KNOW WHAT *APOGEE* MEANS, THANKS.
BUT HERE'S WHAT *YOU* NEED TO KNOW...WHAT I NEED YOU TO TELL YOUR BOSS FOR ME.
I'M *THE BLACK WIDOW...*
...AND THIS IS *MY* CITY NOW.
WHAM

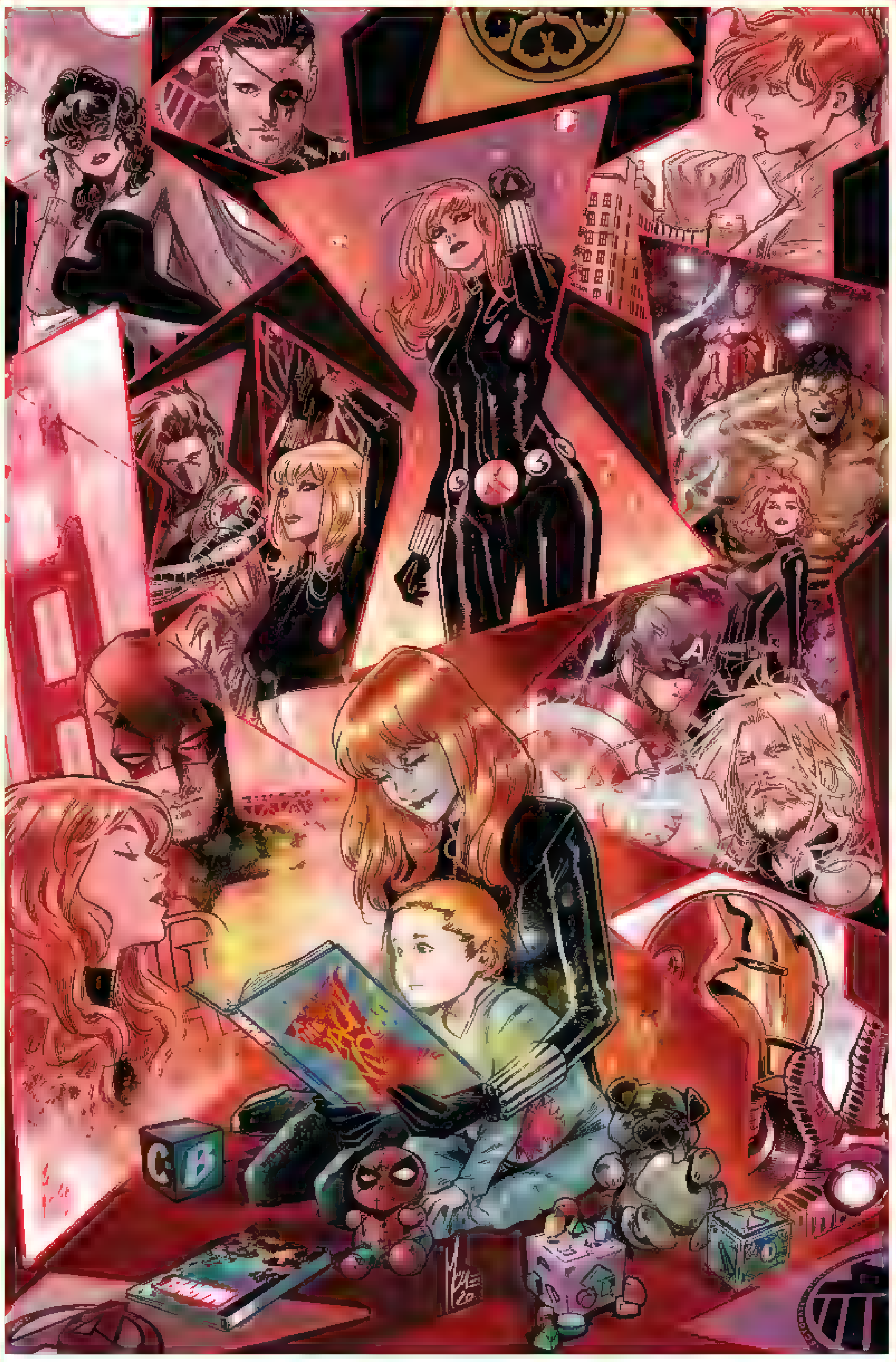
AIIIIIEEEEEEEE!
HOPEFULLY THAT WILL BE ENOUGH TO REALLY GET APOGEE'S ATTENTION.
BEEP
WHITE WIDOW? WHITE WIDOW, ARE YOU THERE? I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE PICKING THIS UP, BUT I'M GOING TO TALK IN CASE YOU ARE.
APOGEE WAS NEVER HERE...
HE'S GOT A LOT MORE FIREPOWER THAN I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED FOR SOMEONE SO NEW TO THE GAME. JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHERE HE'S GETTING IT. OR MAYBE HOW?
ALSO. PLEASE PREPARE THE SPARE ROOM...
...I'M BRINGING SOMEONE HOME WITH ME.



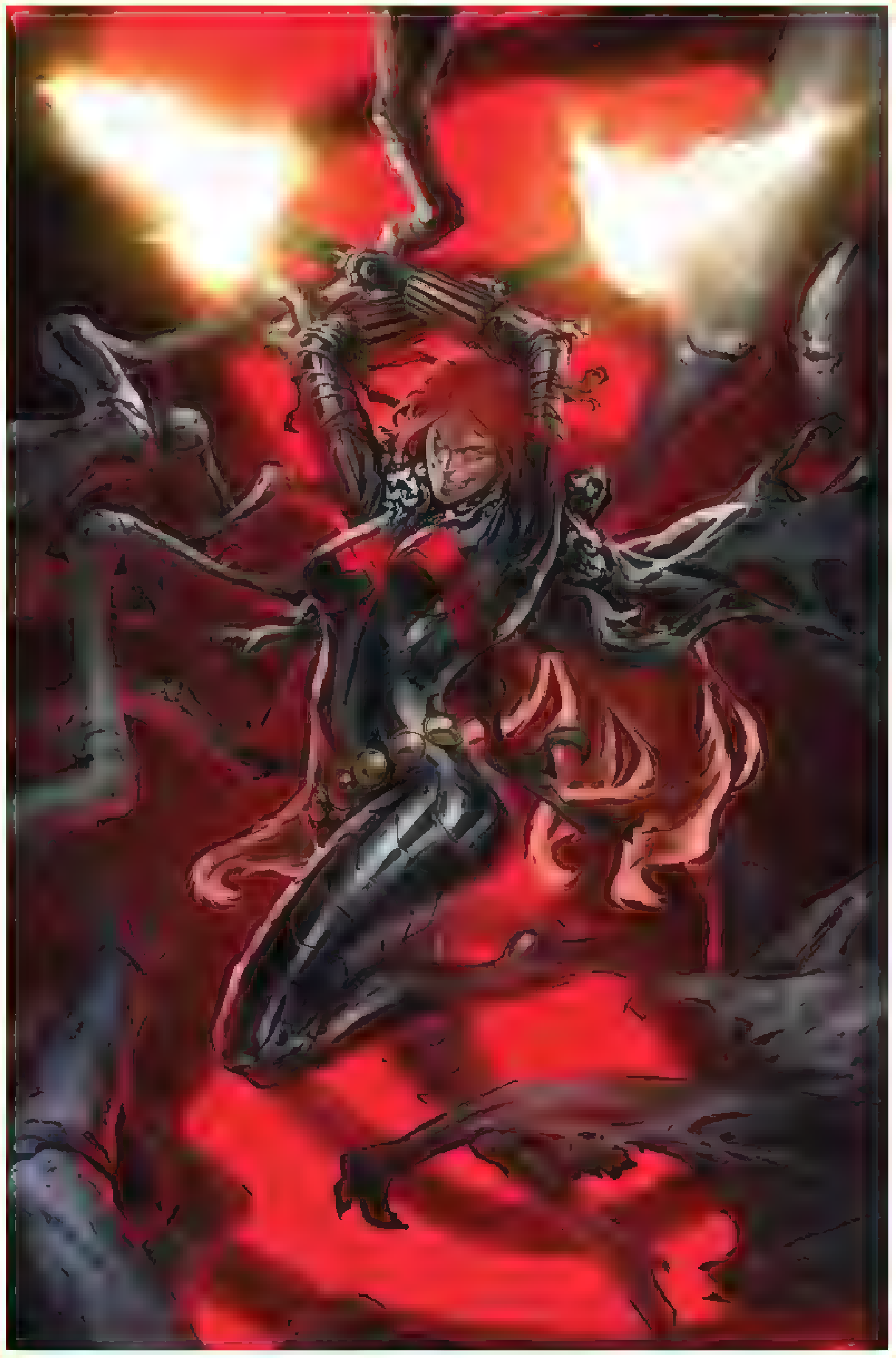
#3 MCU VARIANT BY **JEN BARTEL**



#4 MCU VARIANT BY **PATRICK BROWN**



#4 VARIANT BY **MARCO CHECCHETTO**



#5 KNULLIFIED VARIANT BY **SKAN**

BLACK
WIDOW
SEVEN

MOMMA.
WHAT, MY LITTLE DUCKLING?
SEE DUCKS!
YES. WE'LL SEE YOUR DUCKS. DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BE THERE?
DUCKS! DADA?
YES, BABY. DADDY IS COMING TOO...
THWACK
KRAK

"THE WEB."
THE TENDERLOIN DISTRICT, SAN FRANCISCO.
NEW HOME OF THE BLACK WIDOW.
THE SOUNDS THAT WAKE ME HAVE CHANGED DRAMATICALLY...
...AS HAS THE VIEW.
THWACK
LUCY HAS MOVES. AND NOT JUST THE ONES SHE'S LEARNED FROM YELENA OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS SINCE I RESCUED HER FROM APOGEE.
THWACK
SHE HAS REAL TALENT, WHICH IS WHY YELENA CAN'T LEAVE HER ALONE.
PEARLS ARE MADE THIS WAY. IT IS HOW WE WERE MADE, IN A FASHION.
OW.
YOU LOSE AGAIN, LUCY. BUT YOU DO IT WELL.
AND I WILL NOT HAVE IT.
MY LOT IN LIFE, I GUESS.
YES. THE VIEW IS STARTING TO REMIND ME OF OTHER, OLDER ROOMS.

YELENA SEES LUCY AS A PERSON MANIPULATED BY SOMEONE MORE POWERFUL--GIVEN GREAT POWER BY APOGEE, BUT AGAINST HER WILL. UNCONTROLLED, AND DANGEROUS.
I SEE THE SAME THING. BUT YELENA ALSO SEES A POTENTIAL **WEAPON**...AND WHILE SHE'S NOT WRONG, I CAN'T HELP BUT MOSTLY SEE THE TRAUMATIZED **GIRL** INSIDE THE WEAPON.
WE ARE WHAT OUR EXPERIENCES MAKE US.
THANKS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF ME, YOU KNOW.
I AM NOT TAKING CARE OF YOU--I AM TAKING CARE OF ME.
YOU ARE EASIER TO DEAL WITH WHEN PROPERLY CAFFEINATED.
...
...WHAT?
YOU **KNOW** WHAT.
WE TALKED ABOUT THIS.
I DON'T WANT YOU TRAINING HER, YELENA. IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.
I BELIEVE **ARGUED** IS THE MORE ACCURATE WORD.

YES, NATALIA, YOU SAID THAT. AND I BELIEVE *I* SAID: "WHY DID YOU BRING ME A KITTEN IF YOU DO NOT WANT ME TO CARE FOR IT?"
WE CAN HELP HER GET BACK ON HER FEET. MAKE SURE SHE'S SAFE FROM APOGEE. THAT'S IT.
I'M ***NOT*** TRAINING CHILD SOLDIERS HERE, YELENA. AND IF THAT'S YOUR GOAL, THEN YOU SHOULD FEEL FREE TO LEAVE AS WELL.
SHE IS 20 YEARS OLD-- HARDLY A CHILD. AND I AM NOT TRAINING HER, NATALIA.
JUST TRYING TO TEACH HER A FEW THINGS TO HELP HER ***SURVIVE***. SHE'S A GOOD GIRL.
I KNOW. THAT'S MY WHOLE ENTIRE POINT. DON'T DRAG HER INTO THIS, YELENA.
NOT TO PICK A WHOLE ***NEW*** FIGHT WITH YOU...BUT SHE WAS ALREADY IN IT, NATALIA, AND MAY STILL BE.
MAYBE. OR MAYBE WE CAN ***REVERSE*** WHAT HE'S DONE TO HER, AND THEN SHE CAN CHOOSE FOR ***HERSELF*** WHAT'S NEXT.
AND I DON'T MEAN APOGEE, YELENA. I MEAN... ***ALL*** OF IT. SPIES. SUPER HEROES.
SUPER VILLAINS. WAR. DEATH. HONOR. BETRAYAL. LOSS. ALL OF IT.
THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE FOR HER. SHE CAN STILL ESCAPE IT. IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

YES. WELL. I HAVE BEEN DIGGING THROUGH THE PAPERWORK ON THE BUILDING WHERE YOU FOUND LUCY, AND IT IS JUST ENDLESS SHELL CORPORATIONS--I CANNOT EVEN FIND THE BOTTOM.
THERE'S NOTHING?
I DID NOT SAY THERE IS *NOTHING.* I *AM* THE WHITE WIDOW, AFTER ALL.
YELENA THE GREAT, YELENA THE MODEST.
ONLY ONE OF THOSE IS USEFUL.
I HAVE FOUND MANY MORE BUILDINGS CONNECTED THROUGH THE SAME SHELL CORPORATIONS. WHOEVER THIS GUY IS, HE OWNS HALF OF SAN FRANCISCO.
WE SHOULD MAP THE PROPERTIES. SEE IF THERE'S A PATTERN.
I HAVE ALREADY BEGUN. LUCY IS HELPING.
GREAT.
BUT WE NEED SOMEONE ON THE *INSIDE,* NATALIA.
I ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE INSIDE.

SIX DAYS AGO.
OH MY GOD.
UM. BLACK WIDOW? IS...IT YOU?
I...I DON'T KNOW IF YOU REMEMBER ME--*SPIDER-GIRL?* BUT ONE TIME WE TEAMED UP WITH SPIDER-WOMAN...I MADE THIS JOKE ABOUT US BEING SPIDER LADIES...OR LIKE *SPY*-DER LADIES...AND YOU...DID NOT LAUGH AT ALL AND--
I REMEMBER YOU, ANYA. SIT DOWN.
UM. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I MEAN, IT'S SO COOL YOU'RE HERE, BUT ALSO LIKE... I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE MUCH BETTER AT UNDERCOVER WORK...
...AND--OH MY GOD, I JUST GOT IT...YOU *WANTED* ME TO SEE YOU.
YES.

...WHYYYYYYYY?
TURNS OUT I NEED SOME HELP WITH A MISSION.
...
YES!
ANYA.
I'M SORRY. I JUST...HAD TO GET THAT OUT OF MY SYSTEM.
AND IT'S OUT?
YES. PROBABLY.
ANYA, I NEED YOU TO LISTEN. THIS IS NOT A FUN GIG. THIS IS DANGEROUS.
AND IF YOU'RE NOT UP FOR THAT, IT'S OKAY. IT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL NEVER CALL AGAIN IF THIS ONE ISN'T FOR YOU. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
I DO. AND I'M READY FOR ANYTHING YOU'VE GOT.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT. NOW LISTEN CLOSELY...

ARE YOU KIDDING ME? YOU CANNOT JUST MAKE UNILATERAL MOVES, NATALIA. THAT IS NOT HOW THIS WORKS.
I KNOW. I APOLOGIZE. I'M USED TO KEEPING MY OWN COUNSEL.
IT'S...AN ADJUSTMENT TO SHARE EVERY LITTLE THING.
I'M WORKING ON IT.
THIS IS HARDLY LITTLE. AND *THAT* IS NONSENSE--YOU WORK WITH TEAMS ALL THE TIME. YOU HAVE BEEN AN *AVENGER* MOST YOUR LIFE.
TRUE. BUT THIS MISSION IS DIFFERENT...I'M RUNNING THIS. IT'S ALL ME.
BUT IT IS NOT "ALL YOU," IT IS *US*.
I KNOW. THAT'S WHY I'M APOLOGIZING.
NO MORE SECRETS. I PROMISE.
PING
SHE IS INSIDE ALREADY? HOW LONG?
SHE STARTED UNDERCOVER FOUR DAYS AGO.
=HUFF=
AND SHE JUST MADE *FIRST CONTACT.*
SAYS APOGEE CALLS HIS FOLLOWERS *THE OLIO.*
OLIO?
I THINK IT MEANS...LIKE A HODGEPODGE. YOU KNOW, A MIXTURE OF DIFFERENT THINGS. ALTHOUGH...
INTERESTING.
I DOUBT IT.
IT ALSO HAS A THEATER MEANING--"AN ACT THAT IS PERFORMED DOWNSTAGE WHILE THE UPSTAGE SET IS CHANGED."
SO HIS "OLIO" IS JUST A DISTRACTION FROM WHAT HE IS REALLY DOING?
PERHAPS. SOMETHING TO KEEP OUR EYE ON, AT LEAST.
I'M GOING TO SPEAK TO LUCY ABOUT THIS... ARE YOU STILL MAD AT ME?
YES.
WILL YOU GET OVER IT SOON?
...YES.

KNOCK KNOCK
HEY. CAN WE TALK?
IT'S YOUR WORLD, I'M JUST LIVING IN IT.
I HOPE THAT'S A JOKE AND YOU DON'T REALLY FEEL THAT WAY.
LITTLE BIT OF BOTH.
WELL, LET'S START THERE FIRST, THEN.
AS I'VE SAID, YOU'RE WELCOME TO LEAVE ANYTIME. JUST LET US KNOW, AND WE'LL TAKE YOU ANYWHERE YOU'D LIKE TO GO.
BUT IF I LEAVE, I CAN'T COME BACK.
I THINK THAT'S STILL A QUESTION MARK.
THEN I'M STAYING. IT'S NOT WORTH THE RISK. I WANT TO TAKE HIM DOWN.
I HAVE TO BE A PART OF THAT. I HAVE TO KNOW WHAT APOGEE *DID* TO ME, IF I CAN *FIX* IT.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE *MANIPULATED* LIKE THAT?!
LUCY... STAY CALM, WE TALKED ABOUT--

WE TALKED ABOUT WHAT, NATASHA? THAT I HAVE WILD NEW POWERS THAT I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO CONTROL?!
LUCY. PLEASE CALM DOWN.
NATALIA... EVERYTHING FINE?
YES. WE'RE FINE. JUST TESTING OUR BOUNDARIES A BIT. RIGHT, LUCY?
...RIGHT.

STILL THINK I'M READY TO LEAVE?
I NEVER SAID YOU WERE. I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW IT WAS YOUR CHOICE. IT'S ALWAYS YOUR CHOICE.
...WHY DOES YELENA CALL YOU NATALIA?
IT'S MY NAME. ONE OF MANY.
MOSTLY, I THINK IT REMINDS HER I AM RUSSIAN...
...I THINK IT PAINS HER SOMETIMES HOW *NOT* RUSSIAN I FEEL TO HER. CALLING ME NATALIA JUST HELPS HER FEEL LESS ALONE.
MAYBE YOU *DO* KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE MANIPULATED.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
MAYBE YOU'LL TELL ME SOMETIME?
MAYBE. BUT FOR NOW...WHEN YOU WERE WORKING FOR APOGEE...DID YOU EVER HEAR ANYONE USE THE WORDS "THE OLIO"?
NO. BUT I WENT TO AS FEW OF THOSE CULTY MEETINGS AS I COULD.
I NEVER LIKED THAT STUFF...BUT APOGEE PAID WELL AND I'M A DECENT THIEF...I WAS JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE, Y'KNOW?
I DO.
NOW THAT I'M THINKING ABOUT IT, THOUGH, I DO REMEMBER A NAME. ONE OF THE THUGS YOU FOUND ME WITH SAID IT.
AT FIRST I THOUGHT HE WAS JUST SAYING "BOSS," BUT I'M SURE AT LEAST ONE TIME IT WAS *"VOSS,"* WITH A *V*.
THAT'S HUGE, LUCY. THANK YOU.

I JUST SENT THE COORDINATES. TEN O'CLOCK TONIGHT. SHOULD I MEET YOU THERE?
ABSOLUTELY NOT, ANYA. WE STILL NEED YOU INSIDE.
IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, THEY'LL SUSPECT THE NEW GIRL-- BETTER THAT YOU HAVE AN ALIBI. PROTECT YOUR COVER. REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU.
YEAH. I REMEMBER.
KRKK
THIS SPY NONSENSE IS NOT VERY ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY.
TOSS
10:16 P.M.
THROUGH ME, YOU WILL BECOME ALL THAT YOU IMAGINED AND MORE.

THROUGH ME, YOU WILL ASCEND TO YOUR *TRUE SELF.*
POWERFUL AND *FREE* OF THE WEAKNESSES THAT NOW PLAGUE YOU.
STEP FORWARD, CHOSEN ONES.
LIKE THOSE BEFORE YOU, YOU TAKE THIS *SACRAMENT* WITH A PURE HEART AND OPEN MIND.
YOU AGREE TO BIND YOURSELF IN SERVICE AS THANKS FOR THIS GREAT GIFT.
WE CAN'T LET THEM TAKE THAT...WHATEVER IT IS.
IF WE MOVE NOW, HE WILL RUN-- WE WILL MISS OUR OPPORTUNITY.
WE CAN'T LET HIM POISON THREE PEOPLE IN FRONT OF US, YELENA.
...VERY WELL.
NOW YOU WILL TAKE THIS--

OR HOW ABOUT WE DON'T?
KILL THE UNBELIEVER THAT HAS VIOLATED OUR SANCTUARY!
WHAM
WHITE WIDOW, GRAB APOGEE!
HE *DISAPPEARED!*
LITERALLY?
YES. IN A PUFF OF SMOKE LIKE A VERY BAD CHILDREN'S MAGICIAN.
DAMMIT. ALL RIGHT. LET'S CLEAR OUT. AND YELENA...

...TRY NOT TO KILL ANYONE ON OUR WAY OUT.
I MAKE NO PROMISES.
HNNNG!
WHAM
POW
CRUNCH
HRRRRKKK!
WHOOOSH
KRACK
WHAM
SLAM
BZZZKKT
FWWWWWSSSHHH

FWOOOSH
KICK
TEACH YOU TO THROW YOUR UGLY ARM AT ME.
GAAHH!
YELENA, STOP-- I NEED ONE OF THEM.
DO YOU NEED HIM CONSCIOUS?
I DO NOT.
BZZZAKT

"THE WEB."
SMACK
YELENA. STOP HITTING HIM, IT'S NOT WORKING.
IT WILL WORK, HE JUST NEEDS--
I'M AWAKE, I'M AWAKE!
GREAT. IT WORKED, HE'S AWAKE.
I RECOGNIZE THAT GUY.
HE HAVE A NAME THAT ISN'T GUMBY? BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN CALLING HIM.
ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHAT I CALLED HIM TOO. IS THERE...
...IS THERE A REASON HE'S NOT TIED UP?
NO POINT. HE CAN JUST "GUMBY" OUT OF IT.
BUT I DON'T THINK HE'S THAT DUMB. ARE YOU, GUMBY?
NO. I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE.
WELL, YOU DEFINITELY WANTED A LITTLE TROUBLE. YOU ATTACKED ME AND MY FRIEND HERE.
JUS-JUST BECAUSE APOGEE TOLD US TO. Y-YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THERE.
I DIDN'T...
HNNNG...
HEY. STOP DOING THAT...
...WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, KNOCK IT OFF.
I...I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING. WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!

H-HELP ME!!!
?!
WE DID NOTHING BUT SLAP YOU!
WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?! HELLLLLLLLL
HE--HE'S DEAD...
...IT'S ALMOST LIKE THERE WASN'T EVEN A PERSON THERE... LIQUEFIED ORGANS, EVEN MOST OF HIS BONES...
...LIKE HIS POWERS BURNED RIGHT THROUGH HIM.
Боже мой.
IS THAT...
...IS THAT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME?

#5 VARIANT BY **OLIVIER COIPEL**

AH!
BLACK
WIDOW
EIGHT

SAN FRANCISCO.
SHE IS *LATE.*
GIVE HER A MINUTE. SHE'S NEW TO SHAKING A TAIL. I'M SURE SHE'S BEING OVERLY CAUTIOUS.
WHY DO WE NOT PUT OUR BASE IN *THIS* NEIGHBORHOOD...MUCH NICER THAN WHERE WE ARE.
THAT'S SORTA THE POINT, YELENA. I WANT TO BE WHERE THE PEOPLE WHO NEED US ARE. HOW WILL WE KNOW WHAT THIS CITY NEEDS IF WE PUT OURSELVES ABOVE IT?
I UNDERSTAND. STILL, IT WOULD BE NICE IF WE COULD GET A GOOD CUP OF COFFEE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD.
AND I KNOW IT IS TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR AUTHENTIC SYRNIKI, BUT HOW ABOUT A DECENT BAGEL?
IS THIS REALLY TOO MUCH TO ASK OF *OUR* NEIGHBORHOOD?

YOUR SILENCE LEADS ME TO BELIEVE IT *IS* TOO MUCH TO ASK.
MOMMA! BABY DUCK!
I SEE HIM, BABY. SHOULD WE GIVE HIM A NAME?
NATALIA...
...IT IS NOT STEVIE, NATALIA.

I KNOW.
DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?
I THINK MAYBE YOU SHOULD.
IT IS PART OF THE PROCESS OF *GRIEF*, NATALIA.
I CAN'T.
IT'S TOO COMPLICATED. HOW CAN I SHARE MY FEELINGS WITH YOU WHEN I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND THEM MYSELF?
TRY.
...IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO RECONCILE THE RAGE I FEEL AT WHAT WAS DONE TO ME...WITH THE JOY OF STEVIE AND JAMES.
THERE WAS TRUE LOVE AND HAPPINESS THERE, EVEN IF ONLY A FEW MONTHS OF IT WAS REAL.
IT'S NOT WHAT I WANTED, IT'S NOT WHAT I *CHOSE*, BUT I LOVED THEM ANYWAY.
AND AS I MOURN THEIR LOSS, I CATCH MYSELF FEELING GRATEFUL THAT I GOT THE CHANCE TO LOVE THEM...
...AND THAT FEELING OF GRATEFULNESS IN TURN FILLS ME WITH *RAGE*. GRATEFUL TO THOSE WHO VIOLATED ME? IT'S ANATHEMA.
AND AS *THOSE* VERY REAL FEELINGS CORRUPT MY GENUINE GRIEF FOR THEM, FOR WHAT I HAVE LOST, I BECOME EVER ANGRIER.
MUST EVEN MY GRIEF BE CORRUPTED IN SUCH A WAY?
AND BECAUSE I HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO RETALIATE, AS I MIGHT HAVE IN THE PAST, IT'S...IT'S TAKING TIME TO UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS THESE THINGS.
PERHAPS MORE VIOLENCE ON BEHALF OF THE INNOCENT?
YES. THAT WILL DO NICELY.

GOT ANY CHANGE?
ANYA, THIS IS YELENA BELOVA, THE WHITE WIDOW.
SHE'S WHITE. GOT IT.
THIS ONE IS VERY FUNNY.
SHE CERTAINLY *THINKS* SHE IS.
MAKE SURE NOT TO *DRINK* ANYTHING APOGEE OR THE OLIO GIVE YOU.
THAT'S... BROAD.
WE ARE WORKING ON IT. BUT A POWERED MAN... *DECOMPOSED* IN FRONT OF OUR EYES LAST NIGHT.
OKAY THEN, BROAD IT IS.
THEY'VE CANCELED EVERYTHING... YOU GUYS MADE QUITE AN IMPRESSION LAST NIGHT.
WE ALWAYS DO.
NOW YOU HAVE OUR MONEY, GO AWAY LITTLE URCHIN.
SCREW YOU, LADY!
I LIKE HER.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT.

WE SPOOKED APOGEE. PERHAPS WE WENT TOO HARD?
PERHAPS. WE'LL HAVE TO DIG IN ON THE RESEARCH SIDE.
UGH. I HATE THE RESEARCH. I WOULD RATHER BONK HEADS.
CAN'T SAY I DISAGREE.
BUT WE MUST SACRIFICE.
HOW ABOUT *YOU* DO THE SACRIFICE AND *I* GO BONK HEADS?
YOU KNOW WHAT...THAT'S NOT A TERRIBLE IDEA. I'LL GO BACK TO *THE WEB*...YOU FOLLOW UP ON THE *CORPORATION* WE FOUND.
ARE YOU CERTAIN? I DO NOT WANT TO STEAL YOUR THUNDER.
MY THUNDER IS FINE, THANK YOU.
JUST TRY TO KEEP IT SUBTLE.
SUBTLE IS MY MIDDLE NAME.
THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

THE WEB.
I SUPPOSE, JUST LIKE ME, THIS WASN'T YOUR FAULT. NOT REALLY. THAT'S WHAT SCARES ME THE MOST, I THINK.
THAT WE'RE THE SAME, AND IT DOESN'T MATTER WHOSE FAULT IT WAS. THAT YOUR FATE...
...IS THE SAME ONE THAT AWAITS ME.
THAT I'M LOOKING AT MY FUTURE.
DO YOU THINK THAT'S RIGHT, STAN?
DO YOU MIND IF I CALL YOU STAN? I DIDN'T KNOW YOUR NAME...BUT YOU SEEM LIKE YOU COULD HAVE BEEN A STAN.
I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, STAN. AND NOT JUST BECAUSE I'M AFRAID IT'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME.
EATEN UP BY POWERS I DIDN'T ASK FOR. POWERS FORCED ON ME BY SOME JACKASS WHO FANCIES HIMSELF A CULT LEADER.
POWERS THAT ARE SHINY AND TEMPTING...*ALMOST* A DREAM COME TRUE. BUT INSTEAD THEY'RE A *NIGHTMARE*.

BECAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO PRETEND IT'S ALL BAD, STAN. UNTIL I SAW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, I THINK I WAS EVEN GETTING EXCITED ABOUT THE IDEA OF FINALLY HAVING SOME POWER IN THIS WORLD.
NEVER HAD IT BEFORE. MAYBE IT WAS MY TIME, Y'KNOW?
MAYBE IT WAS MY LOTTERY TICKET?
SOME LOTTERY TICKET.
DID IT HURT, STAN? IT LOOKED LIKE IT HURT, MAN.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE IN HERE, LUCY. IT'S TOO GRIM.
IT MADE ME FEEL BETTER. HE SHOULDN'T BE ALONE. I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE.
IF IT HAPPENS TO ME...DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE, OKAY?
...OKAY.

THE TENDERLOIN.
FUTURE SITE OF AN ALL-
VOSS PROPERTY
AH, SPYCRAFT. CRAWLING INTO ABANDONED BUILDINGS THROUGH GROSS HOLES IN WALLS. THIS IS THE LIFE.
CAN YOU LOVE SOMETHING WHILE ALSO DETESTING IT?
I GUESS IT'S KIND OF LIKE MOVIES THAT ARE SO BAD THEY'RE GOOD?
ACTUALLY, NO, I NEVER UNDERSTOOD THAT. BAD MOVIES ARE JUST BAD.
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT IT *IS* LIKE? AND THIS IS DARK, I KNOW--BUT BEING A SPY IS KIND OF LIKE *LOVE.*
LOVE IS LIKE THE GREATEST THING EVER...AND ALSO CAUSES SO MANY OF THE PROBLEMS. A NEVER-ENDING HEADACHE... HEARTACHE...YEAH.
BEING A SPY IS A LOT LIKE BEING IN LOVE.
I SHOULD PUT THAT ON A T-SHIRT.
'COURSE...I SHOULD PROBABLY NOT PUT SOMETHING ANNOUNCING I'M A SPY ON A T-SHIRT.
YEAH, I'M GONNA HAVE TO WORKSHOP THIS IDEA.

OOOOOOOR MAYBE I'LL BE TOO BUSY.
GATHER CLOSE, MY PRECIOUS OLIO, THE NEWLY CHOSEN, AS YOU EMBARK ON THIS MOST DIVINE SACRAMENT.
YOU WILL EVOLVE WITH ME, IN WAYS YOU HAD NEVER DREAMED. GREAT POWER FLOWS FROM ME INTO YOU...
I CAN'T LET THESE PEOPLE *INGEST* THAT *CRAP*. BLACK WIDOW SAID IT DECOMPOSED A GUY.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP THIS FROM HAPPENING WITHOUT BREAKING COVER.
I GUESS THIS IS WHERE THE SPY RUBBER MEETS THE HERO ROAD, *HUH?* TRICKY STUFF.
THWIP
THWIP
YOINK

?!
SMASH
SEIZE HER, MY OLIO!
WHO ACTUALLY SAYS "SEIZE HER" WITH A STRAIGHT FACE?
I MEAN, WHAT IS THIS? SOME KIND OF OLD-TIMEY WITCH BURNING?
SLAM
WHAMMO
OOF. WELL, THAT'S A BRUISE FOR SURE.

THESE GUYS ARE SO EXCITED TO TEAR ME APART.
DO NOT LET HER ESCAPE!
CATCH HER!
NO, LET HER FALL! WE'LL PICK UP THE PIECES!
THWIP
THWIP
WELL, TOO BAD.
EAT SPIDER-DUST, LOSERS.
THWIP

NAILED IT.
DAMMIT, SPIDER-GIRL... WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE SAFELY AT HOME IN FUZZY PAJAMAS BEFORE YOU START GLOATING.
CAMOUFLAGE POWERS... ACTIVATE!
WOULDN'T IT BE HILARIOUS IF I REALLY HAD TO SAY THAT?
WELL, MY *COVER* IS BLOWN. MY SPY CAREER WAS PAINFULLY SHORT. BUT I THINK I DID THE RIGHT THING...PROTECTING ALL THOSE PEOPLE.
I THINK BLACK WIDOW WILL AGREE.
AND I GOT THE SERUM. THAT'S GOT TO BE WORTH SOMETHING, RIGHT?

THAT NAME YOU GAVE ME-- *VOSS*. YOU SAW HIM ONCE, RIGHT?
SORTA. IT WAS DARK. IT WAS FAST.
THINK YOU COULD RECOGNIZE HIM IF YOU SAW HIM AGAIN?
I CAN TRY...NO PROMISES.
YOU HAVE A BILLION MONITORS, BUT YOU *PRINTED* THESE OUT?
OLD HABITS DIE HARD, I SUPPOSE.
THAT'S HIM.
MUST NOT HAVE BEEN THAT DARK.
OR I'M JUST THAT GOOD.
OR MAYBE YOU'RE TRYING TO IMPRESS ME.
YEAH. IS IT WORKING?
SOMETIMES.
CAN I HELP WITH SOMETHING ELSE?
MAYBE.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S A LIST OF POSSIBLE SHELL CORPORATIONS WE'VE BEEN INVESTIGATING, HOPING TO GET TO VOSS.
WHAT'S VOSS' FULL NAME?
ALDRICH LUX VOSS. QUITE THE PRETENTIOUS MOUTHFUL, IF YOU ASK ME.

OOOOH. THE BLACK WIDOW IS JUDGMENTAL, HUH?
WELL, I GUESS IF YOU WANT TO BE DRAMATIC ABOUT IT.
ONLY AGAINST VILLAINS WHO POWER PEOPLE UP AGAINST THEIR WILL WITH GOD-KNOWS-WHAT-- WHO PREY ON THE VULNERABLE, WHO MANIPULATE AND DESTROY ONLY FOR THEIR OWN GAIN.
I DO. WANT TO BE. DRAMATIC.
WELL, YOU'RE VERY GOOD AT IT.
THIS ONE. THIS IS THE ONE YOU WANT.
IT'S AN ANAGRAM FOR ALDRICH LUX VOSS.
HUX ADVISORS LLC?
WHY?
I'M GOOD AT THAT KIND OF THING.
OKAY. NOW I'M IMPRESSED.
WHAT? WHAT'S WRONG?
THAT'S WHERE YELENA WENT THIS EVENING.
CAN I COME?
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
BUT I HELPED!
YES. CONGRATULATIONS.
DAMN.

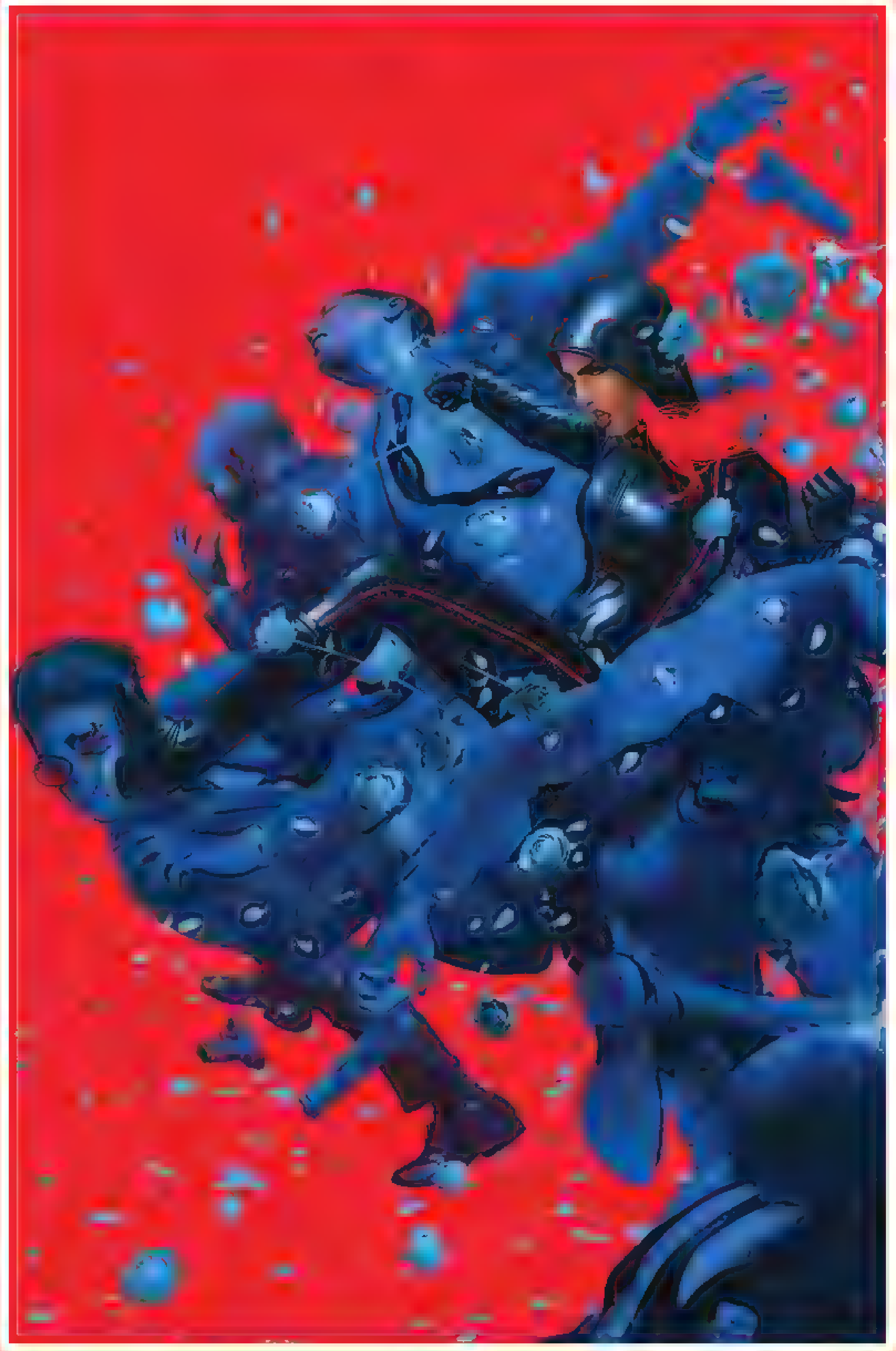
LEAVE IT TO YELENA TO END UP RIGHT IN THE THICK OF IT BY ACCIDENT.
GIRL'S EQUALLY LUCKY AND UNLUCKY--CAN'T DECIDE WHICH THIS IS YET.
ONE LOOKS AT THIS SCENE AND ASSUMES UNLUCKY.
BUT NOBODY LOVES A FIGHT LIKE YELENA. SHE'S TIED TO A CHAIR AND PROBABLY FEELING MORE ALIVE THAN SHE HAS IN MONTHS.
GONNA BE SPITTING MAD WHEN I RESCUE HER, IN FACT.

CRASH
FZZZKT
KICK
WHACK
FZZZKT FZZZKT
WELL NOW YOU ARE JUST SHOWING OFF.
YES.
FZZZKT
THE ONE WE NEED IS THE WIRY KID WITH THE HIPSTER GLASSES.
SLASH
FZZZKT
FZZZKT
FZZZKT
MARKED.

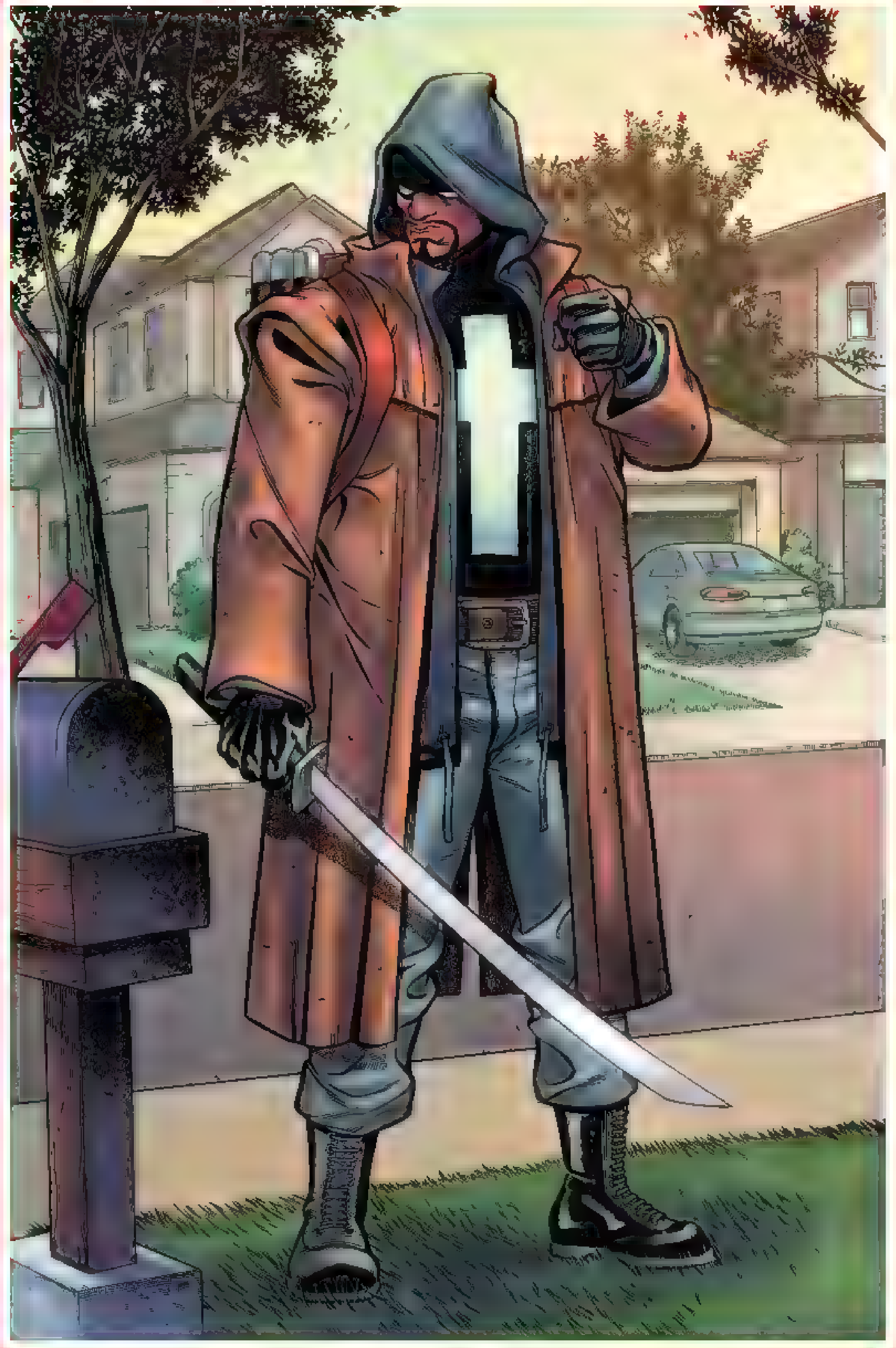
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO BOUND ME.
HI. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
C-CRAIG.
COOL, CRAIG. I'M NATASHA. AND I NEED YOUR HELP. THE GOOD NEWS IS, IT'S GONNA GET YOU OUT OF THIS NIGHTMARE.
YOU ARE LUCKY I HAVE NO TIME FOR REVENGE CUTS.
AND THE BAD NEWS?
BLAM
YOU'RE GOING OUT THE WINDOW.
WHAT?!
BLAM
IT'S GONNA BE *FINE*. I'M A PROFESSIONAL.
ARE YOU COMING?
NOT TECHNICALLY.
BEEP
BEEP
DROOOP
BEEP
BREEEP
BOOM
WATCH YOUR HEAD.

CRACK
OH MY GOD OH MY GOD OH MY GOD. ARE YOU SURE WE HAVE TO DO THIS?
DON'T WORRY, IT WILL ALL BE OVER VERY QUICKLY.
THAT'S NOT A GOOD THING TO SAY RIGHT NOW!
THINK OF THE STORY YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE.
AHHHHH--
WHOOSH
--?!
HEY! THIS IS GREAT!
HEY, WIDOW!

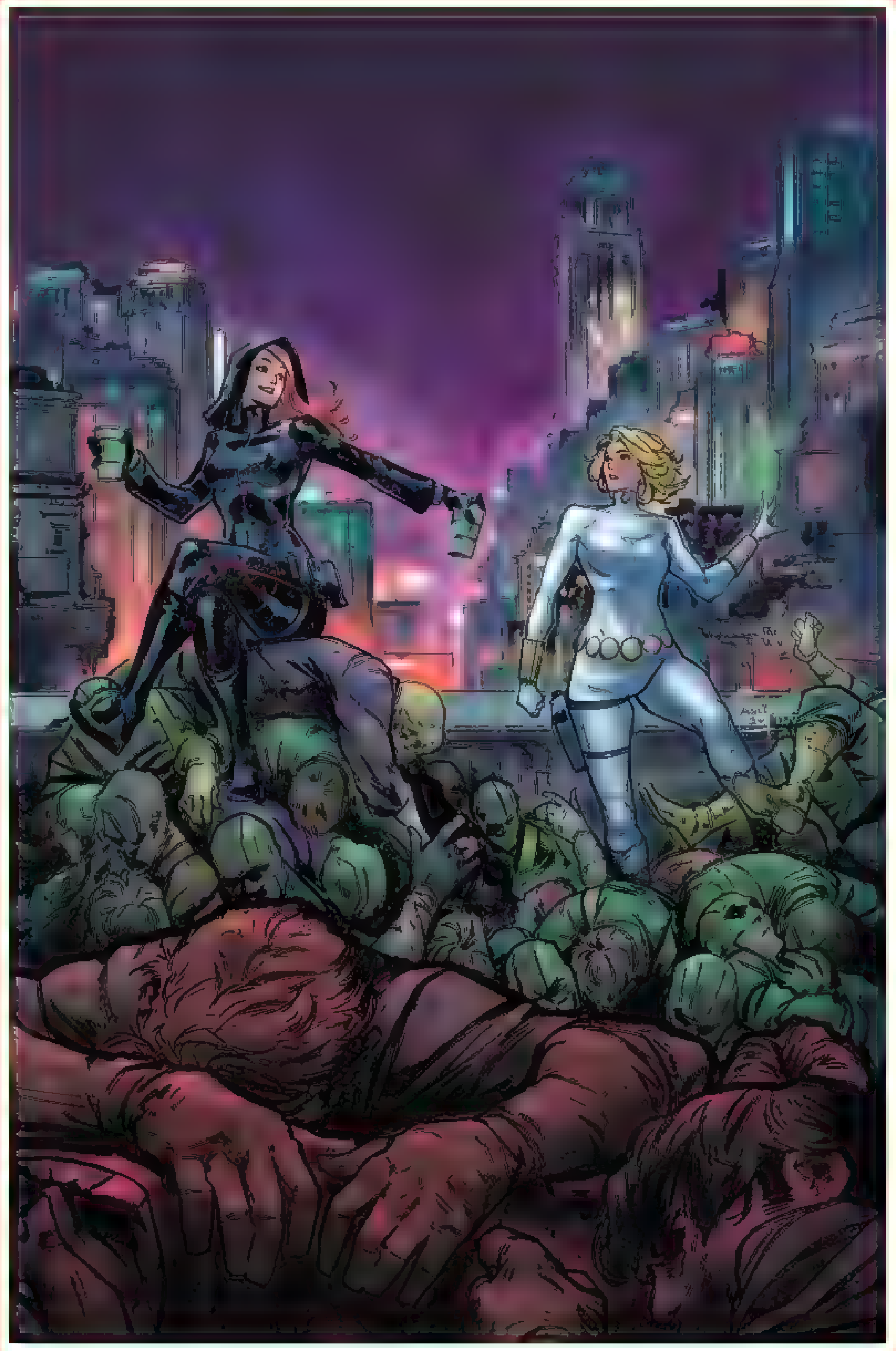
YELENA.
SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR GIRL!
FZZZK
=HRRRRKK=
KTTTT
YELENA!
FZZZKT
YELENA. DON'T DO THIS TO ME, YELENA. PLEASE.



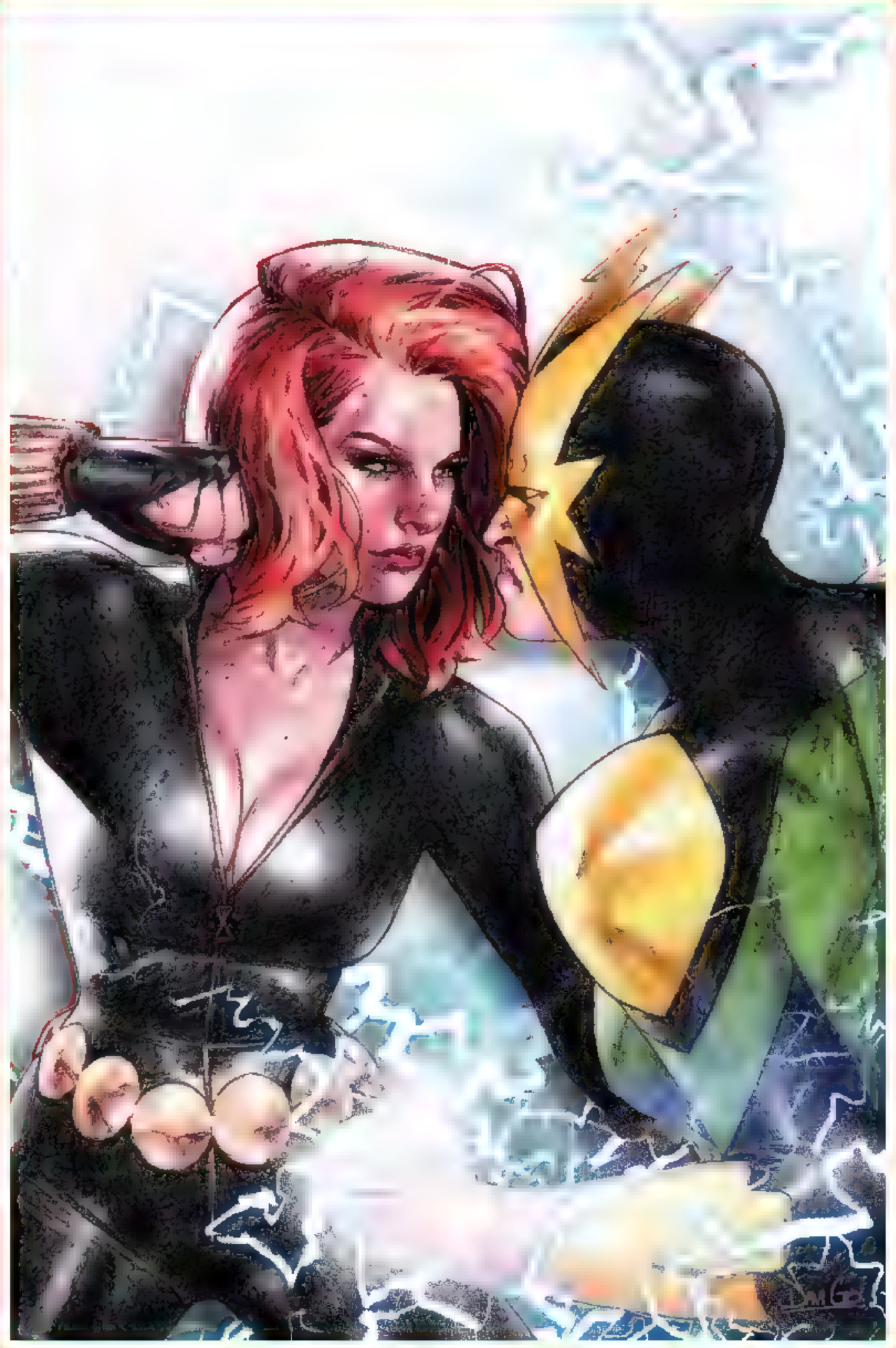
#6 VARIANT BY **RAHZZAH**



#6 HEROES REBORN VARIANT BY **CARLOS PACHECO**,
RAFAEL FONTERIZ & **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**



#7 VARIANT BY
NABETSE ZITRO & **JESUS ABURTOV**



#8 SPIDER-MAN VILLAINS VARIANT BY **DAVI GO**

NINE

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS OF HUX ADVISORS LLC.
NO BREATH. NO PULSE. NO HEARTBEAT. NOTHING.
YELENA! NO!
FZZZAKT
YOU WILL NOT DO THIS TO ME, YELENA.
YELENA!
THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN...NOT LIKE THIS.

=GASP!=
STAB
SUIT WILL DO ITS JOB FOR A WHILE. BUT THAT WOUND WILL BE MORTAL IF THIS TAKES TOO LONG.
SQUICK
STOP. STOP THINKING ABOUT DYING OR YOU'LL BOTH BE DEAD.
MOMMA!
FOCUS.

CLICK
TIME TO SEE WHAT THIS SUIT CAN REALLY DO...

=UNNN!=
=HRRRK!=
=HNNNNG!=
ZOOMMMMMMM
WHOA.

LUCY!
UH. HI.
LUCY, NO.
BZZZ
BZZZZZKKT!
=GASP=
OMIGOD, IT WORKED.

YEL...TAKE IT SLOW...EASY BREATHS.
SPEAK =KOFF= FOR YOURSELF. I =KOFF= WANT *ALL* THE BREATHS.
AND YOU. YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE, AND YOU SHOULD *NOT* BE USING YOUR POWERS--IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
...AND THANK YOU.
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME. THAT BLAST TOOK THEM OUT, BUT THEY'RE ALREADY RECOVERING.
I HAVE A SPARE CHUTE HERE. IT CAN'T CARRY THREE, BUT IT CAN CARRY THE TWO OF YOU. CAN YOU HELP HER?
...YES. BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

I HOPE YOU DIDN'T HAVE A HEAVY LUNCH!
EVEN BETTER, I HAD NO LUNCH TODAY.
UH...WASN'T HER CHUTE FUNCTION IN HER *JACKET*, WHICH SHE IS...NO LONGER WEARING?
CRASH
DO NOT WORRY. NATALIA HAS BEEN LEAPING FROM BUILDINGS HER WHOLE LIFE. SHE ALWAYS HAS A PLAN.
AND LOOKS GOOD DOING IT.

VROOOM
HI.
HOW?
DO NOT ASK, CHILD, JUST GET IN.
LUCY. THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME...AND IF YOU EVER DO THAT AGAIN, I WILL KILL YOU MYSELF.
EXACTLY.
I THINK YOU BOTH MADE THAT PRETTY CLEAR. CAN WE BE DONE SAYING IT NOW?
PERHAPS.
SCREEEECH

THE WEB.
LET'S GET HER TO THE INFIRMARY.
YOU MEAN THAT AREA NEXT TO THE OTHER AREAS?
YES. THE ONE WITH ALL THE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT... WHAT, YOU'RE SUDDENLY ANTI-OPEN CONCEPT?
I EMBRACE ALL CONCEPTS.
YOU GUYS HAVE WEIRD BANTER.
WE KNOW.
WHERE HAVE YOU ALL BEEN?!
OH CRAP. YOU OKAY?
ANYA. YOU'RE IN YOUR SPIDER-GIRL COSTUME... YOU HAD TO BREAK YOUR COVER?
YEAH. THAT'S THE BAD NEWS. GOOD NEWS? I GOT A SAMPLE OF THE SERUM.
EXCELLENT WORK, ANYA.
HUSH.
I DO NOT NEED THIS FANCY BED. I HATE IT.
ALSO, DO YOU GUYS KNOW YOU HAVE SOMEONE IN A WEIRD LOCKED CLOSET YELLING THAT HE'S A SCIENTIST?
I DIDN'T LET HIM OUT, 'CAUSE, Y'KNOW, PROTOCOL... ALSO I COULDN'T FIND A KEY.
THAT'S CRAIG. I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM IN A MOMENT.

I THINK *YOU* NEED THIS TORTURE BED. YOU'RE FAVORING YOUR LEFT SIDE.
JAB
ARRRG!
THE SUIT IS SELF-SEALING. IT CAN WAIT. NOW STAY STILL AND BE QUIET.
CRAIG. I'M SORRY FOR THE DRAMATIC ESCAPE AND THE DELAY-- THINGS GOT A BIT ROUGH AFTER I GOT YOU OUT OF THERE.
AFTER?! IT WAS CHAOS *BEFORE!*
THEN PERHAPS YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW BAD IT GOT.
I'M NOW GOING TO GIVE YOU A BIG SPEECH ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP US, CRAIG, AND *WHY* YOU SHOULD, ALL RIGHT?
OKAY.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT INVOLVED WITH APOGEE, AND I DON'T CARE. HE'S DRAWN IN PLENTY OF PEOPLE, SOME INNOCENT AND SOME LESS SO. WHO YOU WERE DOESN'T MATTER SO MUCH TO ME.
WHAT MATTERS TO ME IS WHO YOU *WANT TO BE.*
THERE IS STILL A CHANCE FOR YOU TO DO SOMETHING GOOD, CRAIG. TO HELP REVERSE THE DAMAGE APOGEE HAS CAUSED.
WH-WHAT KIND OF DAMAGE? I DON'T...I DON'T UNDERSTAND. HIS FOLLOWERS SEEM TO LOVE HIM...
...IT'S, UH, IT'S NOT REALLY MY KIND OF THING-- Y'KNOW--SORTA CULTY VIBES, BUT YO--YOU GOTTA LET PEOPLE CHOOSE THEIR OWN...

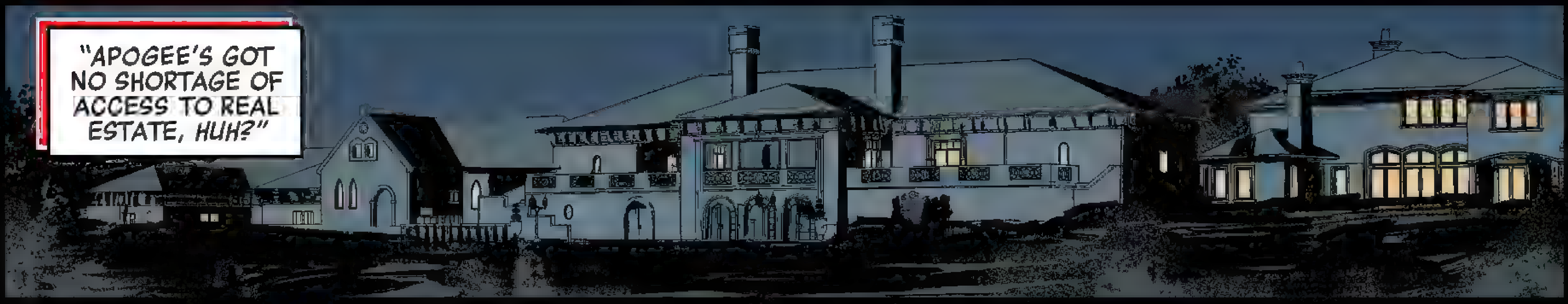
?!
THIS IS WHAT'S HAPPENING TO PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE APOGEE, CRAIG.
THE POWERS THEY GET FROM HIS SERUM BURN THOUGH THEM UNCONTROLLABLY. THIS MAN DIED IN FRONT OF US. IT TOOK SECONDS.
BARF
WELL SAID.
I'M SORRY FOR SUCH A... DIRECT APPROACH, BUT WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
IT'S WORSE THAN YOU THINK...
THE NEXT DAY.
CRAIG HAS BEEN UP ALL NIGHT WORKING ON AN *ANTIDOTE*, BUT HE'S NOT FINISHED AND APOGEE'S MASS DOSING EVENT IS *TONIGHT*.
HE USUALLY ONLY DOSES A FEW OLIO AT A TIME--I'M NOT SURE WHY HE'S CHANGING HIS METHODS.
WE'VE MESSED UP HIS PLANS AND HE'S PANICKING, WHICH MAKES HIM EVEN MORE DANGEROUS.
SO YELENA, ANYA, AND I ARE GOING TO BE CRASHING HIS GET-TOGETHER.
PLEASE LET ME HELP.
YOU ARE HELPING. YOU'RE ASSISTING CRAIG WITH THE ANTIDOTE. AND IF I NEED TO TELL YOU HOW IMPORTANT THAT JOB IS, YOU'RE NOT AS CLEVER AS I THOUGHT.

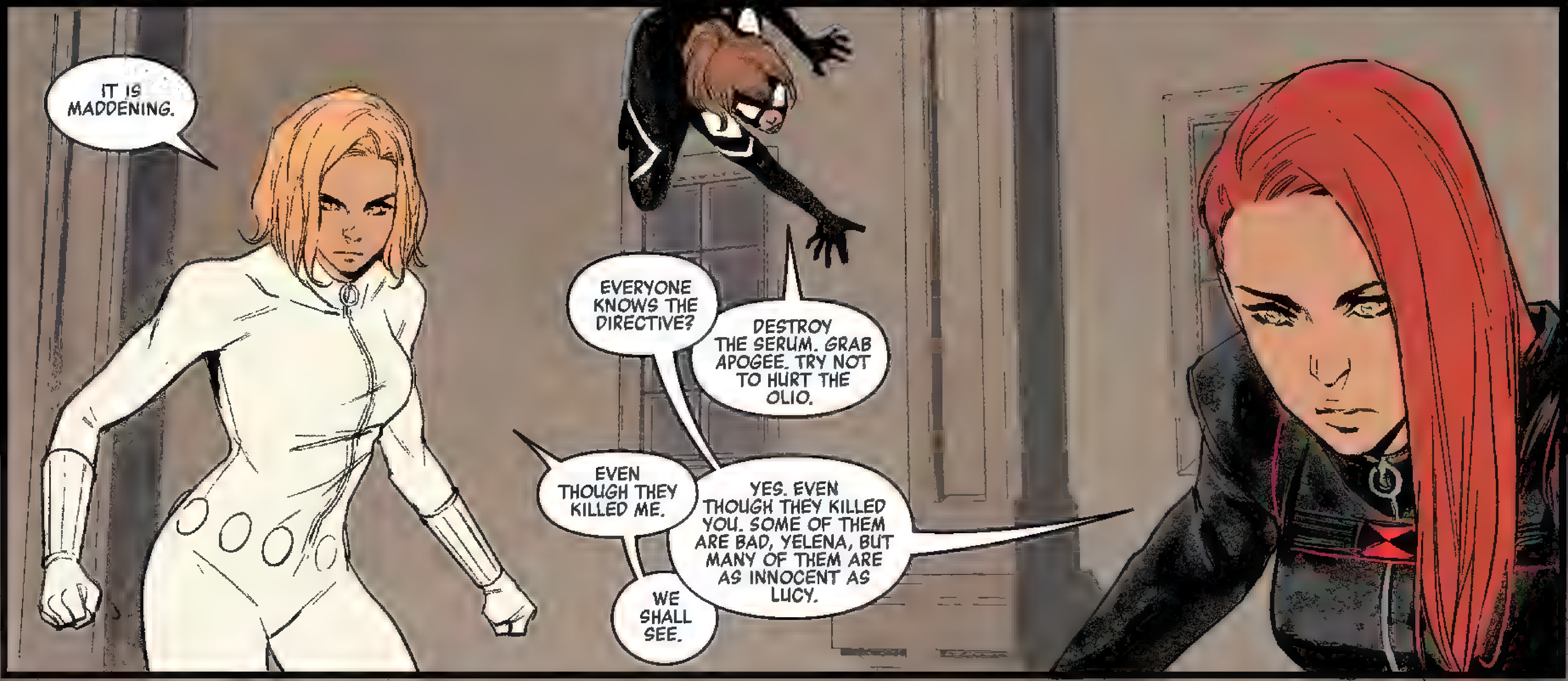
SO, YOU WERE UP ALL NIGHT, *HUH?*
UH. PRETTY MUCH.
YOU KNOW THIS IS A *KITCHEN*, RIGHT?
WELL, THERE WASN'T A REAL LAB HERE, I HAD TO GET CREATIVE.
GUESS BLACK WIDOW WASN'T EXPECTING TO DO MUCH SCIENCE.
SO FEW ARE.
PLENTY OF WEAPONS THOUGH.
SO MANY WEAPONS.
CAN YOU BRING ME MORE PETRI DISHES?
PLEASE LABEL THESE, SAME AS THE LAST SET, AND LOG THEM ON THE SPREADSHEET.
SHOULD YOU TAKE A BREAK?
THERE'S NO TIME.
...OKAY.
LET ME AT LEAST MAKE YOU SOME FOOD.
SINCE THE KITCHEN IS NOW A LAB, YOUR PEANUT BUTTER MIGHT HAVE SERUM IN IT. THAT'S COOL, RIGHT?
HEH. SOUNDS DELICIOUS.

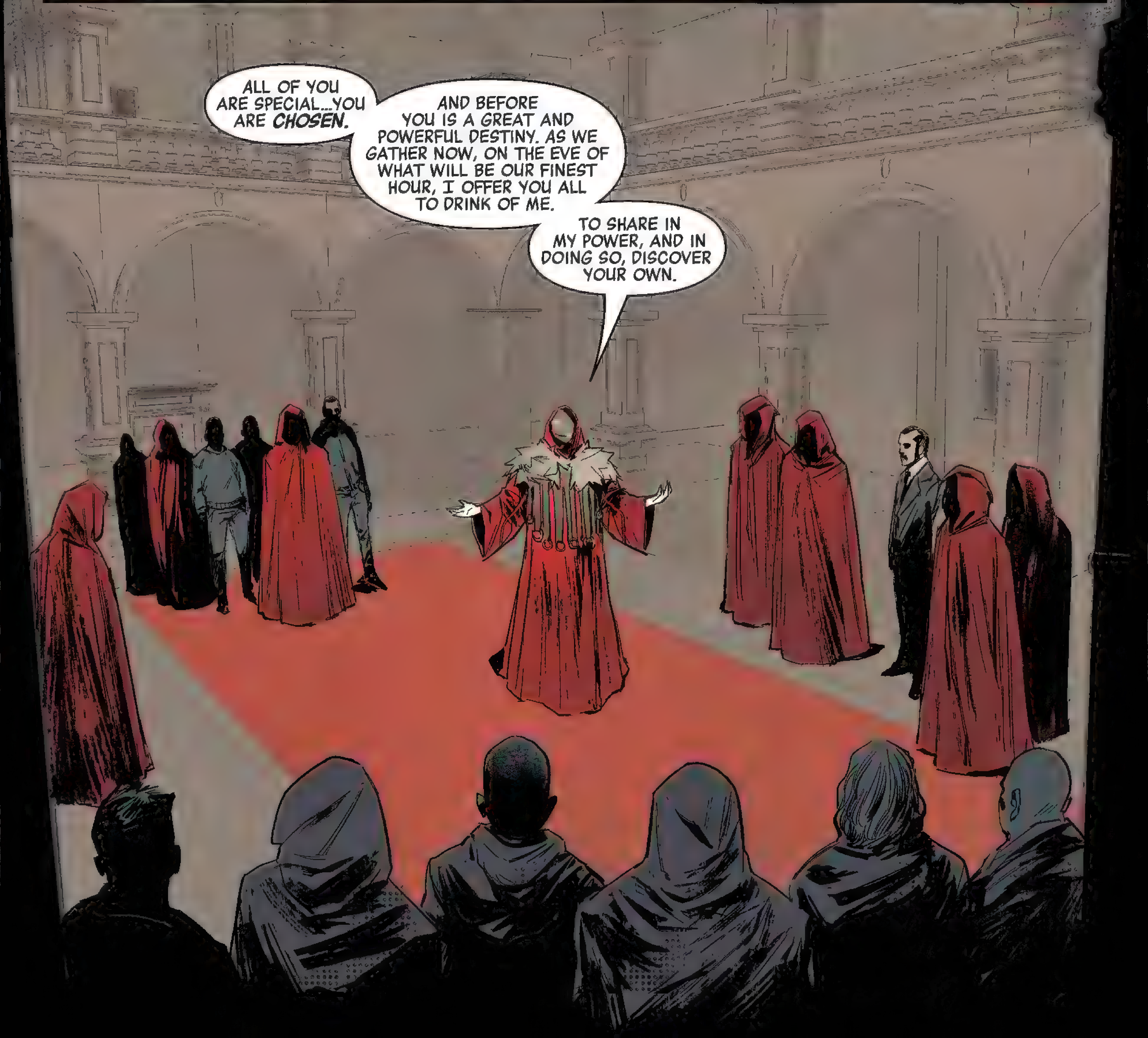
IS THIS EVEN POSSIBLE?
WHAT?
AN ANTIDOTE. SO FAST. DOESN'T IT TAKE...LIKE, A REALLY LONG TIME TO DO THIS KIND OF THING?
TYPICALLY? YES.
BUT...?
BUT I'M NOT TYPICAL.
DID YOU GET POWERS TOO?
NOT FROM APOGEE. HE JUST RECRUITED ME WHEN HE REALIZED WHAT I COULD DO.
WHAT *CAN* YOU DO?
IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN...IN ADDITION TO BEING A GENIUS, I HAVE SOMETHING LIKE, I DON'T KNOW...SUPER-GUESSING? SOME KIND OF PROBABILITY THING. IF I MAKE A DECISION, IT'S USUALLY THE RIGHT ONE.
LIKE WORKING FOR APOGEE?
LIKE I SAID... *USUALLY.*
HE THREW A LOT OF MONEY AT ME...IT WAS HARD TO TURN DOWN. BUT I SHOULD HAVE ASKED MORE QUESTIONS.
WE *ALL* SHOULD HAVE. BUT HE KNOWS HOW TO PICK HIS PREY. *THAT* MIGHT BE *HIS* SUPER-POWER. TRY NOT TO BEAT YOURSELF UP OVER IT.
BESIDES... IN A WAY, IT *WAS* A GOOD DECISION... IF YOU TAKE THE LONG VIEW, I MEAN.
IF APOGEE HAD GOTTEN SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP HIM...SOMEONE *LESS GOOD*, THEN MAYBE THEY WOULDN'T BE WORKING WITH THE BLACK WIDOW NOW TO TRY TO *FIX* THINGS.
...THANKS. THANKS FOR SAYING THAT.

BLACK WIDOW IS RIGHT, YOU KNOW.
YEAH, I KNOW. SHE'S ALWAYS RIGHT. IT'S ANNOYING.
WHAT'S SHE RIGHT ABOUT *THIS* TIME?
THE MORE YOU USE YOUR POWER, THE HIGHER YOUR CHANCES OF BURNING UP.
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT, NOT FOR SURE.
NOT FOR SURE. BUT I SAW ANOTHER GUY'S POWERS BURN THROUGH HIM LIKE THAT. WE THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A FLUKE.
BUT THAT GUY *DID* USE HIS POWERS ***A LOT.***
BUT IT ALSO JUST MAKES SENSE... I MEAN, IT'S THE BOMB INSIDE YOU THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO GO OFF...WHY WOULD YOU DELIBERATELY SHAKE IT UP?
MAYBE BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO...
...OR BECAUSE IF YOU'RE GONNA DIE, YOU WANT TO AT LEAST GO OUT FIGHTING THE GUY WHO DID THIS TO YOU.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A SUICIDE MISSION, LUCY.
MAYBE...
BY THE WAY...THE GUY WHO...MELTED...I'VE BEEN CALLING HIM STAN, BUT IF YOU HAVE HIS REAL NAME, I'D LIKE TO KNOW IT.
I DON'T. BUT WE CAN PROBABLY FIND OUT... I MEAN, DEPENDING ON HOW ALL THIS ENDS, I GUESS.
YEAH. DEPENDING ON THAT.

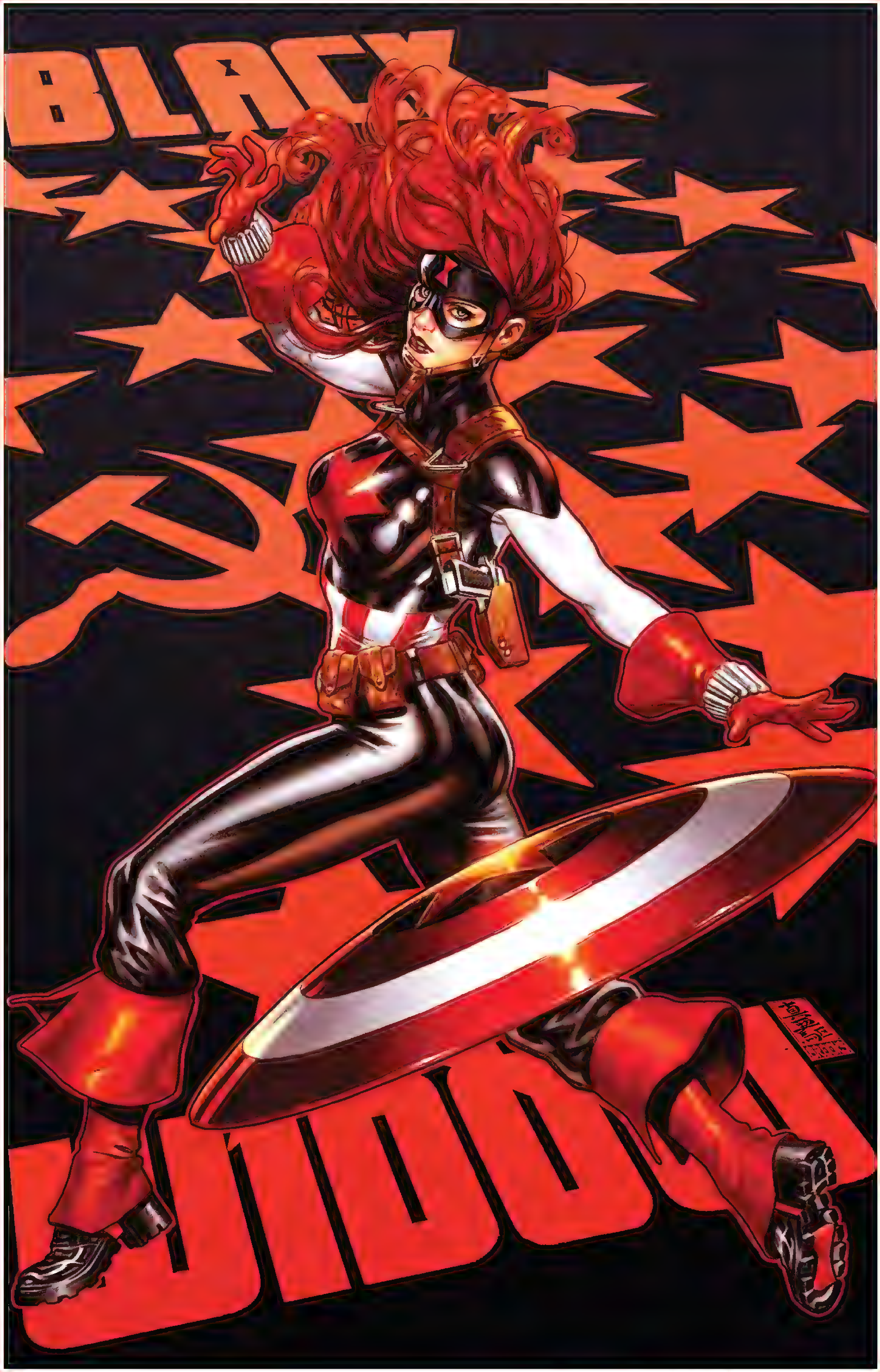

"APOGEE'S GOT NO SHORTAGE OF ACCESS TO REAL ESTATE, HUH?"


IT IS MADDENING.
EVERYONE KNOWS THE DIRECTIVE?
DESTROY THE SERUM. GRAB APOGEE. TRY NOT TO HURT THE OLIO.
EVEN THOUGH THEY KILLED ME.
YES. EVEN THOUGH THEY KILLED YOU. SOME OF THEM ARE BAD, YELENA, BUT MANY OF THEM ARE AS INNOCENT AS LUCY.
WE SHALL SEE.

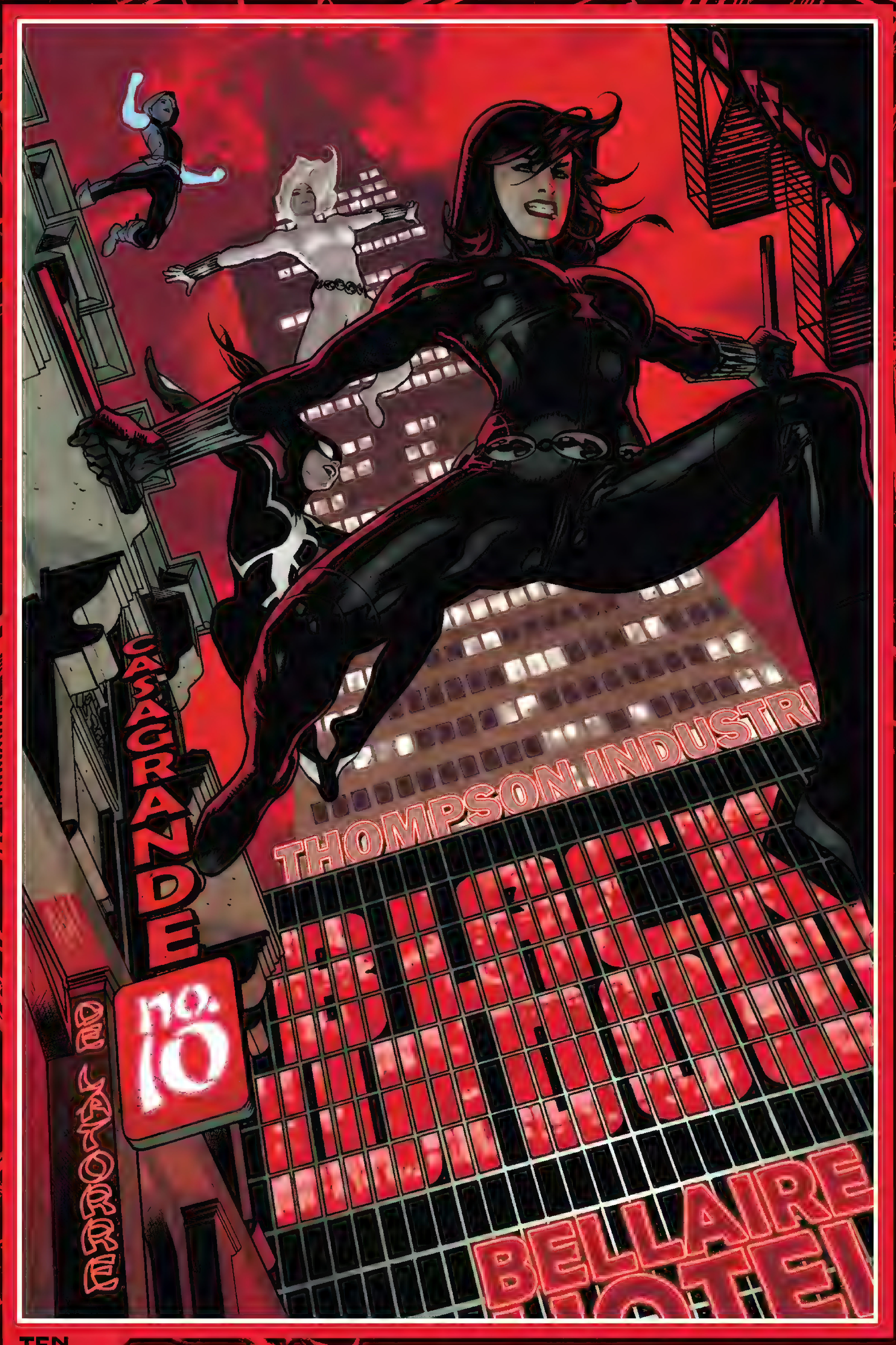

ALL OF YOU ARE SPECIAL...YOU ARE *CHOSEN.*
AND BEFORE YOU IS A GREAT AND POWERFUL DESTINY. AS WE GATHER NOW, ON THE EVE OF WHAT WILL BE OUR FINEST HOUR, I OFFER YOU ALL TO DRINK OF ME.
TO SHARE IN MY POWER, AND IN DOING SO, DISCOVER YOUR OWN.

HOW ABOUT A MOUTHFUL OF SPIDER-WEBS? YEAH, YOU LOVE IT.
THWIP
THWIP
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY THIS TIME, APOGEE.
I REMEMBER *YOU* TRIED TO KILL ME.
TOSS
SLAM
AND ALSO YOU.
AND I DON'T REMEMBER YOU, BUT I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OF YOU EITHER.
SLAM
KRAK
ARGGHH!
SLAM

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH, WIDOW.
I THINK I KNOW *EXACTLY* WHO I'M DEALING WITH, AND I CAN'T WAIT.
CRUNCH
DID HE JUST... THAT SOUNDED LIKE A *CYANIDE CAPSULE,* BUT IT CAN'T BE...
YOU KNOW NOTHING! NOT *WHO* AND NOT *WHAT!*
...BECAUSE IT'S SO MUCH WORSE THAN THAT.


BLACK
WIDOW

#9 CAPTAIN AMERICA VARIANT BY **MARK BROOKS**


CASAGRANDE
no. 10
DE LA TORRE
THOMPSON INDUSTRI
BELLAIRE HOTEL

TEN

THE WEB.
I DID IT. IT'S DONE.
I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE TIRED. I AM GOING TO SLEEP FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.
NOT YET! WE GOTTA GET THE *ANTIDOTE* TO BLACK WIDOW BEFORE YOU SLEEP.
YEAH, YEAH. I MEANT AFTER.
UH... YES?
ARE YOU IN THE BLACK WIDOW'S *BEDROOM?*
IS THAT...IS THAT *WISE?* THAT SEEMS LIKE THE KIND OF THING A PERSON COULD GET KILLED FOR DOING.
DESPERATE TIMES, DESPERATE MEASURES, CRAIG.
SO, YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO CONGRATULATE ME?
I CONGRATULATED YOU HOURS AGO...WHEN YOU FIRST SAID YOU WERE FINISHED.
YEAH, I MEAN...I WAS... BUT THEN I HAD TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO CONVERT THE ANTIDOTE TO A GASEOUS FORM SO WE COULD DISTRIBUTE IT *EN MASSE.*
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU NEEDED MORE TIME. GAVE ME A CHANCE TO GET READY.
GET READY FOR...

...OH NO. LUCY, *NO.*
WHAT? IT LOOKS BAD?
REALLY? I THOUGHT IT WAS PRETTY GOOD.
YOU LOOK GREAT...BUT YOU CAN'T--YOU CAN'T USE YOUR POWERS. WE TALKED ABOUT THIS. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
WE HAVE TO GET THE WIDOWS THE ANTIDOTE REGARDLESS. BEST TO BE PREPARED.
DO WE EVEN KNOW HOW TO FIND THEM?
YEAH, NAT AND YELENA HAVE TRACKERS IN THEIR SUITS...LIKE LITTLE PERSONAL LOJACKS. I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THEY ARE.
WHY THE SYRINGES? I THOUGHT WE WERE DOING THE ANTIDOTE GAS THINGAMAJIGS.
WE ARE. AND PLEASE DON'T CALL SCIENCE STUFF "THINGAMAJIGS."
THESE ARE *BACKUPS* IN CASE WE MISS ANYONE. YOU JAM THIS THING IN AND PUSH THE PLUNGER, AND THEIR POWERS SHOULD SHUT DOWN INSTANTLY.
...COOL.

IN FACT-- WE SHOULD GIVE YOU THE ANTIDOTE RIGHT *NOW*.
WE CAN'T DO THAT YET. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND WHEN WE GET TO THE WIDOWS...I CAN'T PROTECT US WITHOUT THESE POWERS.
LUCY...
THIS ISN'T A DISCUSSION I'M WILLING TO HAVE, CRAIG. LIKE YOU, I ONCE HELPED APOGEE, AND THERE'S A PRICE FOR THAT.
NATASHA AND YELENA ARE TRYING TO SAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE'S LIVES, AND I WANT TO BE A PART OF THAT SOLUTION.
RIGHT NOW, I HAVE THE POWER TO DO THAT. IF WE TAKE IT AWAY, WELL, I GUESS I'D RATHER DIE ON MY FEET THAN SIT ON THE SIDELINES WHILE MY FRIENDS ARE HURT... MAYBE KILLED.
I ADMIRE YOUR PASSION, LUCY, BUT I STILL THINK IT'S A MISTAKE.
I GUESS WE'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH. NOW LET'S GO SAVE THE WORLD...OR AT LEAST PARTS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA?
HMMM. SOUNDED BETTER WHEN I JUST SAID "WORLD," RIGHT?
DEFINITELY.
THOUGH I FELT BETTER ABOUT OUR CHANCES WHEN YOU SAID THE SECOND PART.
YEAH. ME TOO.

PARTS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.
DAMN.
WELL, IT WILL BE HARDER FOR HIM TO DISAPPEAR NOW.
YELENA BELOVA. ALWAYS THE MASTER OF UNDERSTATEMENT, THAT ONE.
DEFILERS!
MY OLIO! DEFEND ME! DEFEND YOURSELVES! WE ARE ONE, WE ARE ALL!
MOVE!
ANYA, HIT HIM WITH YOUR WEBBING--TRY TO SLOW HIM DOWN!

SORRY, BOSS...GONNA NEED...JUST... A...MINUTE!
YOU--
ARRRRGGGGHHHHH!
FOOSH
NO.
APOGEE! YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS MADNESS. THIS IS WHAT YOUR SERUM IS DOING TO PEOPLE!
THAT... THAT'S A LIE! YOU DID THAT!
WHATEVER YOU MAY THINK OF ME, SURELY YOU DON'T THINK I LIGHT PEOPLE ON FIRE.
I...
PLEASE HELP ME END THIS. NOBODY ELSE HAS TO DIE...NOT EVEN YOU.

APOGEE'S MAKING FOR THE DOOR AGAIN!
THWACK
I AM TOTALLY WILLING TO GO AFTER HIM, BUT I'M GUESSING BOTH OF YOU ARE GONNA VETO THAT.
AND I *AM* SORTA BUSY, IF I'M HONEST.
THWIP
THWIP
THWIP
THWIP
THWIP
YOUR INSTINCTS ARE CORRECT, ANYA. STAY WHERE YOU ARE.
HNNNG!
WHAMMO
GAH!
THOUGH WE MUST STOP APOGEE, NATALIA IS ADAMANT ABOUT HELPING THESE DAMNABLE OLIO...
CRUNCH
THWACK
...EVEN IF "HELPING" CURRENTLY LOOKS LIKE *THIS*.
I SEE WHERE HE'S HEADED... WE JUST NEED TO GET THINGS UNDER CONTROL IN HERE.
WHOMP
KRAK
EEEP!
WE ARE JUST TOO OUTNUMBERED HERE FOR ME TO CONSIDER CHASING AFTER APOGEE. UNLESS...
THUNK
THUNK
YES. LADIES. OUR REINFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED.
FZZZT
THUNK
ARRGGGH!
HRRRRK!
GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT, *HAWKEYE*.

WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR THE WORLD.
THOUGH MAYBE NEXT TIME A BIT MORE NOTICE?
FWIP
FAIR.
THWACK
ARRGGHHH!
FZZAKT
LADIES. YOU HAVE THE ROOM. I'M ON APOGEE.

AND STAY DOWN THIS TIME!
WHAM
OOOF!
FZZAKT
I DON'T WANT TO SAY I LOVE HAWKEYES... BUT I JUST DO.
YOU! TRAITOR!
OH CRAP.
NOPE.
FZZZKRAK
LUCY! NO POWERS! AND WHAT ARE YOU TWO EVEN DOING HERE-- WE DISCUSSED THIS.
WELL... CRAIG HAS THE ANTIDOTE READY.

Слава богу!
THESE OLIO ARE LIKE THE DAMNED HYDRA...CUT ONE DOWN AND IT FEELS LIKE TWO TAKE THEIR PLACE.
UM. YOU MEAN THAT AS, LIKE, A METAPHOR, RIGHT? NOT LITERAL.
YES. METAPHOR ONLY.
WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO THIS, CRAIG?
UH. JUST KEEP THEM FROM KILLING ME WHILE I GET THIS GAS READY?
MAYBE... SECURE ALL THE DOORS SO THAT LESS GAS ESCAPES?
AND WE CAN ALSO BREATHE THIS GAS WITH NO ILL EFFECTS?
YEAH. WE'LL BE FINE.
WHERE'S NAT?
SHE WENT AFTER APOGEE.
ANYA. SECURE ALL DOORS.
YOU WANT TO TRAP THEM IN?!
AFFIRMATIVE.
NOT ASKING ANY QUESTIONS, JUST DOING WHAT I'M TOLD...
THWIP
LUCY, I-- DAMMIT.
WHERE'S SHE GOING?
AFTER NAT AND APOGEE, NO DOUBT.

NOT REALLY SURE WHY HE'S RUNNING--AT THAT SIZE AND WITH WHATEVER FIERY NONSENSE HE'S GOT GOING ON, WHY DOESN'T HE THINK HE CAN TAKE ME?
UNLESS... WHAT AM I MISSING?
CLICK
CLICK
HUMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
WOW. I FEEL *THAT.*
I *WILL* KILL YOU, WIDOW! DON'T TEST ME!
WE'LL SEE.
SMASH

H-HOW?
I'M FULL OF SURPRISES... JUST LIKE YOU.
KA-POW
YOU HAVEN'T BEGUN TO SEE **MY** SURPRISES.
FWASHH
FWOOM
I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU HIDING BEHIND THIS MASK. LET'S FINALLY HAVE A LOOK AT YOU, SHALL WE?
TOSS
YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET THAT.
NO...

DON'T!
KRRRIK
YOU NEVER UNDERSTOOD ANYTHING ABOUT THIS, WIDOW.
I DID WHAT I HAD TO DO TO *SURVIVE.*
I DON'T NEED TO UNDERSTAND IT WHEN YOU'RE MANIPULATING AND ABUSING THE MOST VULNERABLE FOR YOUR OWN ENDS.
I SAW NOBODY ATTACKING YOU BUT ME.
LIKE I SAID, YOU KNOW NOTHING!
AND NOW YOU WILL PAY FOR THAT!
SUIT IS OUT OF JUICE. THIS IS GONNA BE TRICKY.

FZZZZZZZAKT
ARRRGGHH!
WIDOW'S BITE IS BARELY GONNA REGISTER AT HIS SIZE...
ARRRGHH!
...BUT IT'S A GOOD DISTRACTION.
WH-WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE, JACKASS. FEELS COOL TO BE DOSED WITH SOMETHING AGAINST YOUR WILL, RIGHT?
YOU LITTLE--
MMMM. I'D HOLD THAT THOUGHT.
SLAM
NO!

FALL COULDN'T HAVE KILLED HIM. HE'LL BE--
NATASHA!!!
I--I CAN'T STOP IT!!!
IT BURNS!!!
AIIIEEEEEE!!!
STAB
=HUFF= =HUFF=
I... IT'S NOT... I STILL CAN'T TURN IT OFF!

DOES IT HURT ANYMORE?
NO. BUT...WHAT AM I GOING TO DO...I CAN'T JUST-- I CAN'T JUST *BE* LIKE THIS. FOREVER...
WE DON'T KNOW THAT IT'S FOREVER. WE'LL WORK ON IT.
...OKAY.
FOR NOW, WEAR THESE. AND WE'LL COME UP WITH SOME BETTER OPTIONS BACK AT THE WEB.
THIS IS THE *START* OF SOMETHING... NOT THE END. BE STRONG, BE CALM.
I WON'T LEAVE YOU...I PROMISE.
...I KNOW.
I LOST APOGEE IN THE CHAOS OF LUCY'S POWERS SURGING OUT OF CONTROL... BUT WITHOUT HIS OLIO, HE'S DONE. AT LEAST FOR NOW.
PLENTY OF THESE GUYS ARE GOING TO BE MAD. FOR SOME OF THEM, THAT WILL SOFTEN WITH TIME; OTHERS WILL NEVER BELIEVE THAT THE POWER WAS KILLING THEM.
PEOPLE SPEND THEIR WHOLE LIVES TRYING TO ACQUIRE POWER. TAKING IT FROM THEM BY FORCE WAS A VIOLATION, BUT ONE THAT COULDN'T BE AVOIDED.
I KNOW WE SAVED THEM, BUT THEY MAY NEVER SEE IT THAT WAY. I DON'T KNOW THAT THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT.

I KNOW YOU'RE ALL CONFUSED. BUT THE ANTIDOTE YOU'VE BEEN DOSED WITH HAS SAVED YOUR LIVES. THE SERUM YOU INGESTED WAS TOXIC.
YOU GET POWERS FOR A WHILE...BUT THEY'RE UNNATURAL, AND THEY BURN THROUGH YOU...KILLING YOU.
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT!
WE SAW IT FIRSTHAND...AND SO DID ALL OF YOU. YOUR FRIEND BURNED UP IN FRONT OF YOU--THAT WASN'T US. THAT WAS HIS POWERS.
THIS SMALL SCIENTIST SAVED YOU ALL. YOU SHOULD KISS HIS FEET.
UH. PLEASE DON'T.
I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY. AS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN VIOLATED AND MANIPULATED MANY TIMES IN MY LIFE, I UNDERSTAND THAT ANGER WELL.
I KNOW HOW HARD IT IS TO NOT BE IN CONTROL, TO NOT HAVE POWER. BUT I ASSURE YOU THAT APOGEE WAS NOT THE WAY.
THAT'S NOT YOUR DECISION!
WE GET TO--
SQUEEZE
--URK!

HEY. HAVE SOME RESPECT.
OR PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE ME TO CHOKE YOU WITH MY OTHER HAND? BURN RIGHT THROUGH YOU? COULD BE FUN.
LUCY...
SOME OF YOU KNOW ME. I USED TO STEAL FOR APOGEE. I DIDN'T TAKE APOGEE'S SERUM WILLINGLY-- IT WAS *FORCED* ON ME. AND A FEW MINUTES AGO IT WAS BURNING THROUGH ME...KILLING ME.
THE ANTIDOTE STOPPED ITS PROGRESS, BUT NOT WITHOUT A PRICE.
BUT YOU STILL HAVE YOUR POWERS-- YOU GOT LUCKY!
LUCKY?! I CAN'T TURN THIS OFF, JERK.
I'LL NEVER TOUCH ANYONE FLESH TO FLESH EVER AGAIN WITHOUT HURTING THEM...*YOU* WANT THAT FUTURE?
YOU WERE ALL HEADED FOR THIS FATE...OR WORSE.
SO BE GRATEFUL. AND GO THE #$@% HOME.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE THE LEADER?
SHE'S A NATURAL.
THIS WAS FUN, BUT CAN I GO? I NEED TO SLEEP FOR A VERY LONG TIME.
OF COURSE. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU, CRAIG. YOU HAVE MY THANKS. IN FACT, LET'S SAY I OWE YOU ONE.
THAT SEEMS LIKE A GOOD THING TO HAVE IN MY BACK POCKET.
IT IS.
CAN I HAVE ONE OF THOSE?
DONE.
STOP GIVING OUT FAVORS, NATASHA. THIS IS NOT A CHARITY.

MY KIND OF TEAM. THE BEST AT WHAT THEY DO...
...AND SCRAPPY AS HELL.
CAN WE EAT? I'M STARVING.
YESSSSSS.
AND PRIORITIES FIRMLY IN ORDER.
SPLISH

BLACK
WIDOW

#10 VARIANT BY **MARK BROOKS**

BLACK WIDOW
ELEVEN

THE WEB.
SAN FRANCISCO.
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO MOVE FASTER THAN THAT!
THWIP
THWIP
THWIP
YEAH, WELL, NOT ALL OF US CAN STICK TO THE CEILING, ANYA!
I'M NOT EVEN ON THE CEILING!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE!
DON'T BE JEALOUS OF MY NATURAL ATHLETICISM, LUCY!
THERE'S NOTHING NATURAL ABOUT BEING ON THE CEILING!
DEPENDS ON YOUR LEVELS OF SPIDER-DNA!
HEY. LESS TALK, MORE FIGHT.
NICE BLOCK, LUCY.
IS THAT HAPPENING WITHOUT YOU DOING ANYTHING ADDITIONAL OR ARE YOU "TURNING YOUR POWER UP"?
UH. I THINK IT'S JUST HAPPENING.
WHICH I GUESS IS GOOD FOR FIGHTING AND BAD FOR EVERYTHING ELSE IN MY LIFE?
PERHAPS.
ANYA, COME DOWN AND LET US TRY SOME SPARRING.
HEY NATASHA.
YOU WANNA SPAR WITH US?
MAYBE LATER. I'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR OR TWO.
...

GET STARTED WITH YOUR PRACTICE. NO CEILINGS. I WILL BE BACK.
NATALIA.
WHAT?
I THOUGHT WE HAD MOVED PAST THIS.
PAST WHAT?
PAST YOU KEEPING YOUR OWN COUNSEL.
YELENA. I CANNOT SHARE WITH YOU MY EVERY THOUGHT.
SO WE HAVE *NOT* MOVED PAST THIS.
YELENA. WE'RE *SPIES.* WE KEEP SECRETS. I'M DOING MY BEST. LET IT GO.
I TOLD YOU I CANNOT DO THIS WITH YOU IF YOU CONTINUE TO TREAT ME AS YOUR *EMPLOYEE,* NATALIA. IT IS PARTNERS OR I MUST MOVE ON.
→SIGH←
I'M GOING TO SEE A SOURCE. HE'S NOT PARTICULARLY OPEN TO NEW PEOPLE. OKAY?
WAS THAT REALLY SO DIFFICULT?
YES.
I HEARD THAT!
OF COURSE YOU DID.

IT'S NOT THAT I'M NOT GRATEFUL THAT SHE'S HERE. I AM.
EVEN *I* KNOW IT'S NOT A GOOD TIME FOR ME TO BE ALONE.
AND THAT HASN'T REALLY CHANGED.
STILL.
SOMETIMES A GIRL NEEDS A LITTLE SPACE.
AND MAYBE A FEW SECRETS TOO.

Open
COME BACK TOMORROW. WE'RE CLOSED.
NOT FOR ME, MAXI.
NATASHA, MY DARLING GIRL. YOU DISAPPEARED. I FEARED SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO YOU.
YES, WELL... THINGS GOT A BIT MESSY.
AS THEY DO.
AS THEY DO.
COME, COME. I HAVE WHAT YOU ASKED FOR.

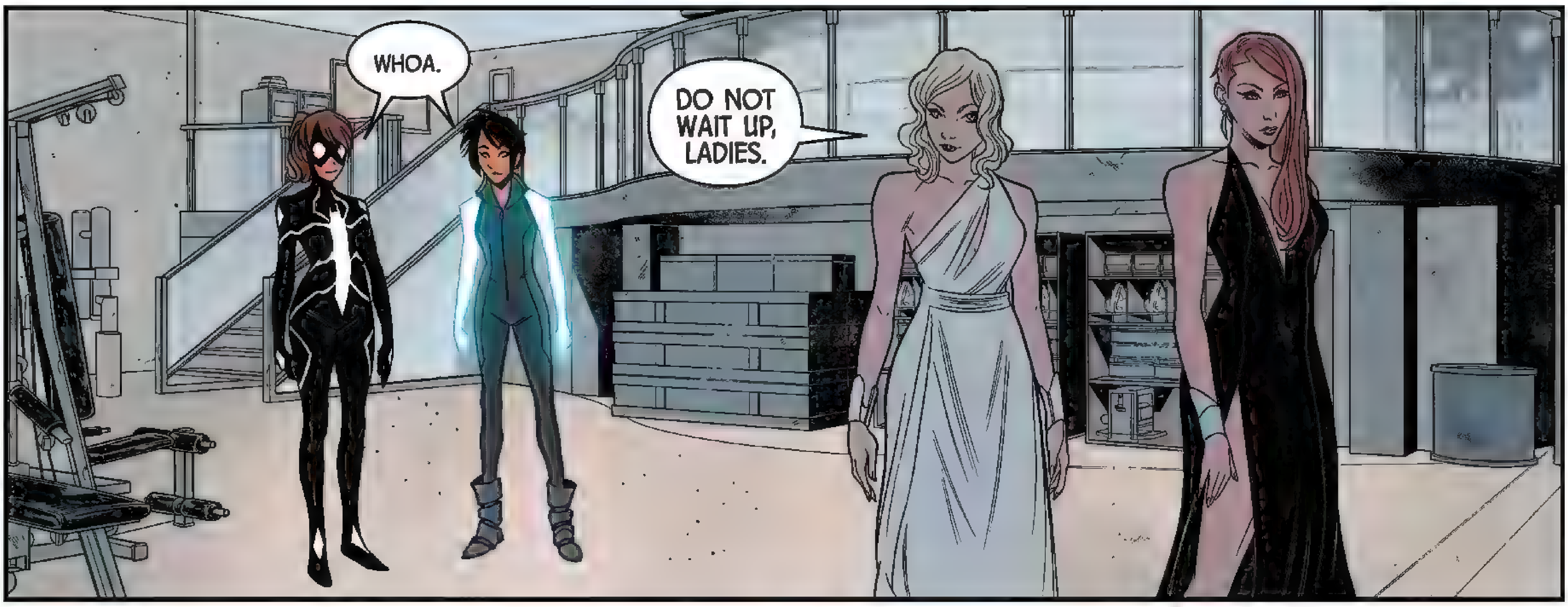
WAS SORTA HOPING AFTER ALL THIS TIME AWAY, YOU'D BRING ME SOMETHING A BIT MORE CHALLENGING.
BUT THE *BASICS* ARE ALWAYS FUN.
YOU'VE DONE SOME UPGRADES SINCE I WAS HERE LAST.
YES, WELL, HAVE TO KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES. BUT I STILL MOSTLY PREFER THE OLD WAYS, IF I'M HONEST.
I DON'T DISAGREE.
STILL, THERE *ARE* PERKS. AND ADAPTATION KEEPS US YOUNG. NOT THAT *YOU* HAVE THAT PROBLEM.
THERE YOU GO. EVERYTHING A YOUNG LADY NEEDS TO START ALL OVER. GO ANYWHERE. BE ANYONE. SKY'S THE LIMIT.
THANKS, MAXI.
ON THE SUBJECT OF MORE CHALLENGING...

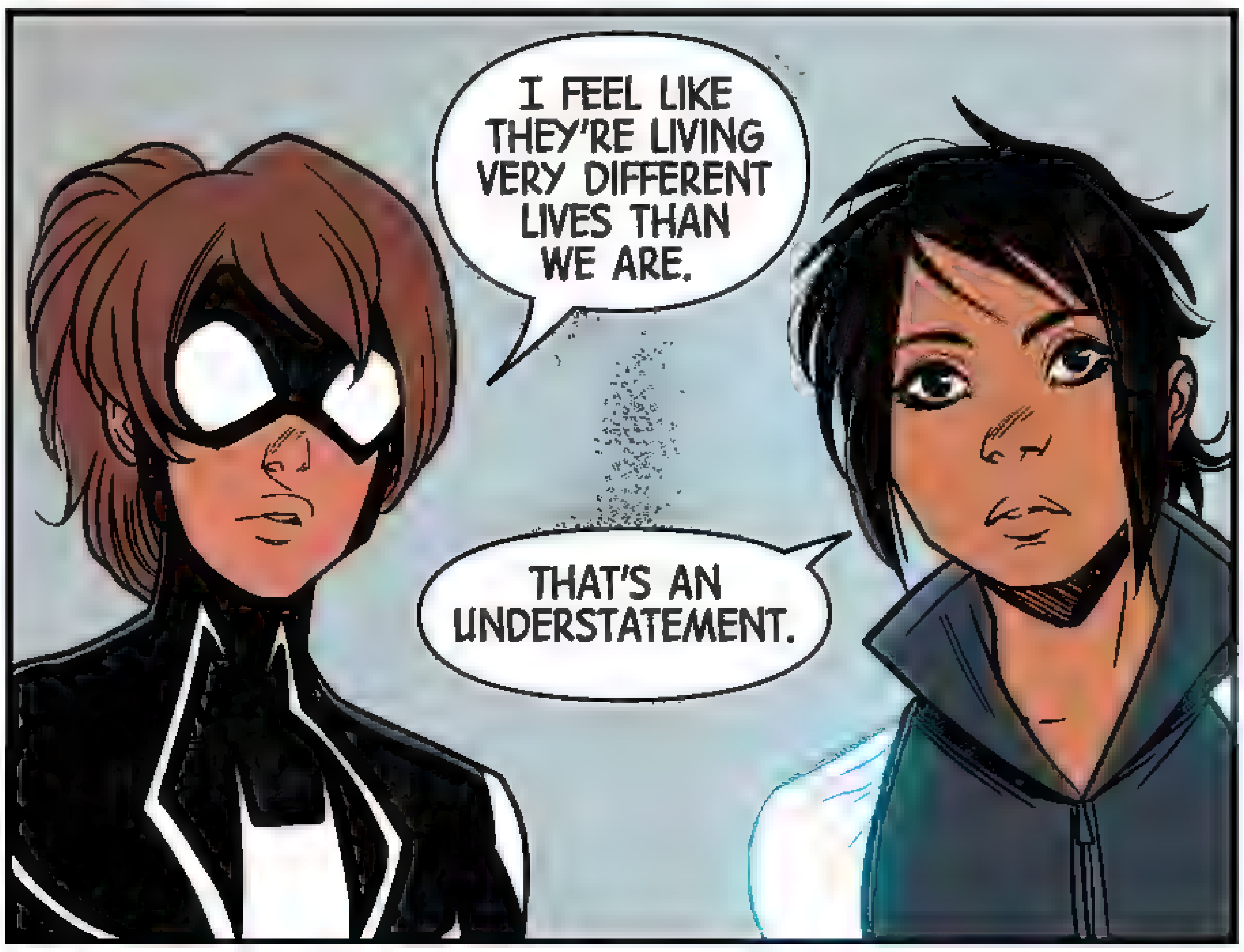
I RECENTLY DEALT WITH SOMEONE CALLING HIMSELF *APOGEE.*
GLAD TO HEAR IT--RUMOR HAS IT THAT GUY WAS GETTING A LOT OF PEOPLE KILLED.
YES. BUT SOMETHING ABOUT OUR LAST ENCOUNTER... I WAS LEFT FEELING LIKE I WAS MISSING SOMETHING. SOMETHING BIG, SOMETHING *IMPORTANT.*
ABOUT HIM?
MAYBE.
DO YOU KNOW THE TWINS?
NO. THEY LOCAL?
YEAH, USED TO BE BIG SOCIALITE TYPES...STILL ARE, I GUESS, BUT THEY'RE SORT OF...I DON'T KNOW, PERFORMANCE ARTISTS?
WORK WITH A CIRCUS IN THE BAY AREA. NOT YOUR USUAL LOW-RENT SORT OF THING. MORE OLD-TIMEY FREAK SHOW MEETS THAT CIRQUE DU SOLEIL BUSINESS.
VERY HOT RIGHT NOW.
ANYWAY, THEY KNOW EVERYTHING. OR SEEM TO. 'SPECIALLY IF IT'S GOT THAT HIGH-SOCIETY VIBE.
I DON'T SUPPOSE THEY'RE FRIENDLY?
EH. SORTA DEPENDS. THEY'RE RICH JERKS...LIKE TO KEEP THEMSELVES ENTERTAINED, WHICH MIGHT WORK IN YOUR FAVOR.
THEY'RE PLAYFUL...BUT THAT INCLUDES PLAYING WITH THEIR FOOD.
UNDERSTOOD.
THANKS, MAXI.
WATCH YOUR BACK, KID.

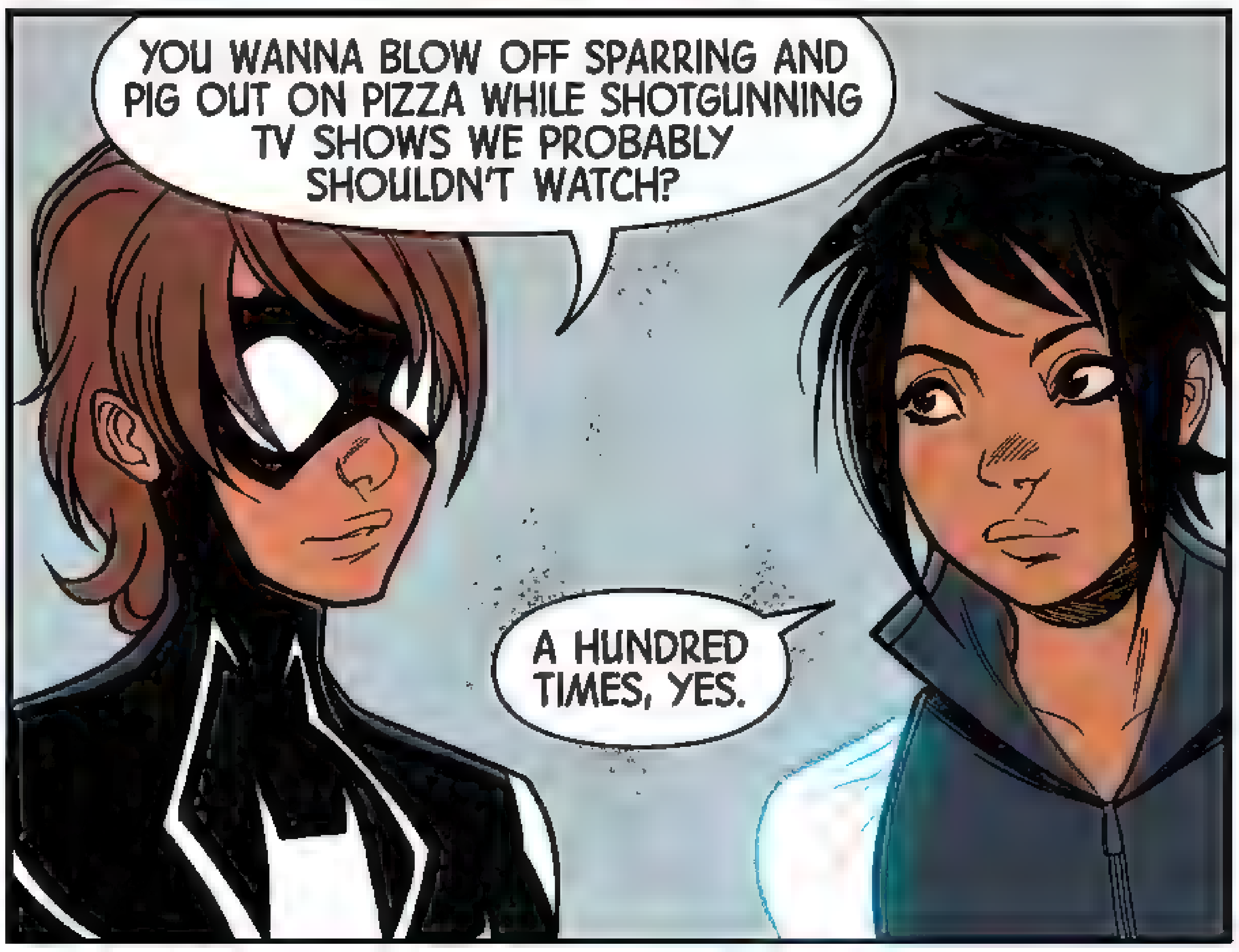
...SOMETHING ELSE?
AH! IT BROKED!
DON'T WORRY, WE CAN FIX IT.
OR JUST BUILD IT ALL NEW.
...YES.
JAMES GREY AND STEVE "STEVIE" GREY--NOT SURE WHAT NAMES THEY'RE USING NOW. DISAPPEARED ABOUT TWO... TWO AND A HALF MONTHS AGO.
THE USUAL.
PUT IT ON MY ACCOUNT.
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, WIDOW?
YES.

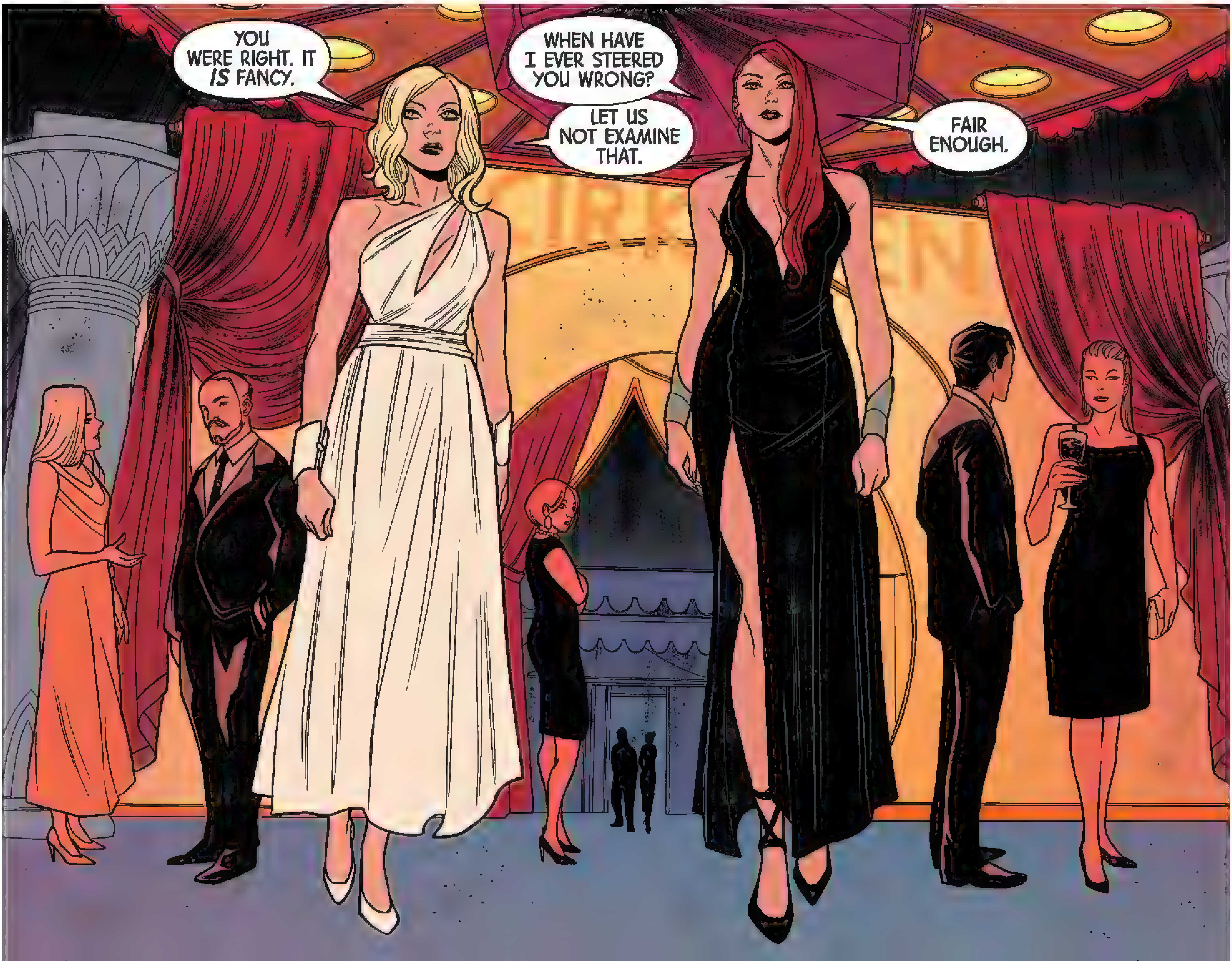
FZZK
FZZK
FZZK
YIPES! THOSE HURT!
THWIP
ANYA, YOUR POWERS ARE MOSTLY VERY COOL, BUT THE WEBS...THEY'RE PRETTY GROSS.
FSSSSSHHHH
EVERYTHING COMES WITH A PRICE, I GUESS.
FZZT
FZZT
FZZT
ARE YOU TRYING TO DO A METAPHOR ABOUT MY WHOLE MESSED-UP LIFE?
I DUNNO. MAYBE?
THWIP
THWIP
OKAY. YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT.
NOBODY INSULTS THE WEBS, NGUYEN!
NOW, NOW-- PLAY NICE, LADIES.

WELL, DON'T JUST *LOOM.* COME IN.
WHAT DID YOUR SOURCE SAY?
IT WASN'T EXACTLY A SOURCE--IT WAS A COBBLER.
BUT HE WAS ABLE TO GIVE ME A TIP...ANOTHER SOURCE WE SHOULD INVESTIGATE.
AND YOU ARE NOT GOING TO TELL ME WHY YOU NEEDED A *COBBLER?*
I THINK IT'S OBVIOUS. BUT WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT LATER IF YOU LIKE. FOR NOW, WE SHOULD FOCUS ON THE NEW SOURCE.
NATALIA!
I KNOW YOU'RE STILL PISSED. BUT CAN YOU TABLE THAT AND PUT ON YOUR BEST DAMN FORMAL WEAR SO WE CAN GET OUT OF HERE?
WHAT?!
WHERE WE'RE GOING IS *FORMAL.* YOU NEED TO CHANGE.
FINE!
I KNOW. SHE'S SO LOUD AND GROUCHY, RIGHT?
PURRRRR


WHOA.
DO NOT WAIT UP, LADIES.


I FEEL LIKE THEY'RE LIVING VERY DIFFERENT LIVES THAN WE ARE.
THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT.


YOU WANNA BLOW OFF SPARRING AND PIG OUT ON PIZZA WHILE SHOTGUNNING TV SHOWS WE PROBABLY SHOULDN'T WATCH?
A HUNDRED TIMES, YES.


YOU WERE RIGHT. IT *IS* FANCY.
WHEN HAVE I EVER STEERED YOU WRONG?
LET US NOT EXAMINE THAT.
FAIR ENOUGH.

CIRKUSEN
CIRKUSEN?
SWEDISH FOR CIRCUS.
DO NOT SPEAK TO ME LIKE I DO NOT KNOW SWEDISH.
THEN WHAT'S THE QUESTION?
THEY WANT TO BE FANCY...OR THEY WANT TO BE THE IKEA OF CIRCUSES. THEY SHOULD MAKE UP THEIR MINDS.
HEH.
THE TWINS
I'D LIKE TO KEEP THIS CIVIL IF POSSIBLE.
AGREED. I HAVE NO INTEREST IN RUINING ANOTHER OUTFIT.
EXACTLY.
WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ODDS ARE OF CIVILITY?
...SLIM TO NONE.
OOOH. THE WIDOWS--
--WONDERED WHEN YOU WOULD SHOW UP, WE'RE--
--ALMOST INSULTED IT TOOK YOU--
--SO LONG. YES, ALMOST.

OUR APOLOGIES. AS YOU KNOW, WE'RE NEW TO THE AREA, STILL DISCOVERING THE CITY.
THEY WANT FEALTY? I CAN GIVE THEM FEALTY NO PROBLEM.
YELENA? THAT'S A QUESTION MARK.
AND ALSO YOU HAVE BEEN SO BUSY--
--YES. BUSY AS BEES. APOGEE WAS--
--A PROBLEM. WE'RE NOT SO SORRY TO--
--SEE THAT YOU HAVE DEALT WITH HIM.
WE'RE... GLAD YOU'RE GLAD.
SOMEONE TOLD ME YOU MIGHT KNOW MORE ABOUT APOGEE.
WE KNOW EVERYTHING, DARLING. WE ARE *LIV AND LARS,* WE ARE--
--*THE HUB.* AND THAT MEANS--
HERE IT COMES.
--WE KNOW *YOU* TOO.

SO MUCH FOR FEALTY.
SHE'S EVEN STRONGER THAN SHE LOOKS.
SO THIS IS HOW YOU WANT IT?
WE WANT IT SO MANY WAYS.
THIS CREEPY THIN MAN IS TOO THIN FOR KNIVES.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY... YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO RICH--
--OR TOO THIN.
CHARMING.
WAIT. HER BODY...

...HER MASS IS CHANGING? *FAST.*
BYYYYYE!
DO YOU LIKE THIS SIZE BETTER, WHITE WIDOW?
SLAM
THEY SHARE THEIR MASS. SHIFTING IT BETWEEN THEM WITH A THOUGHT. VERY TRICKY.
I WILL TAKE YOU AT ANY SIZE, YOU OVERGROWN SHINING KNOCKOFF.
FZZKT
FZZKT

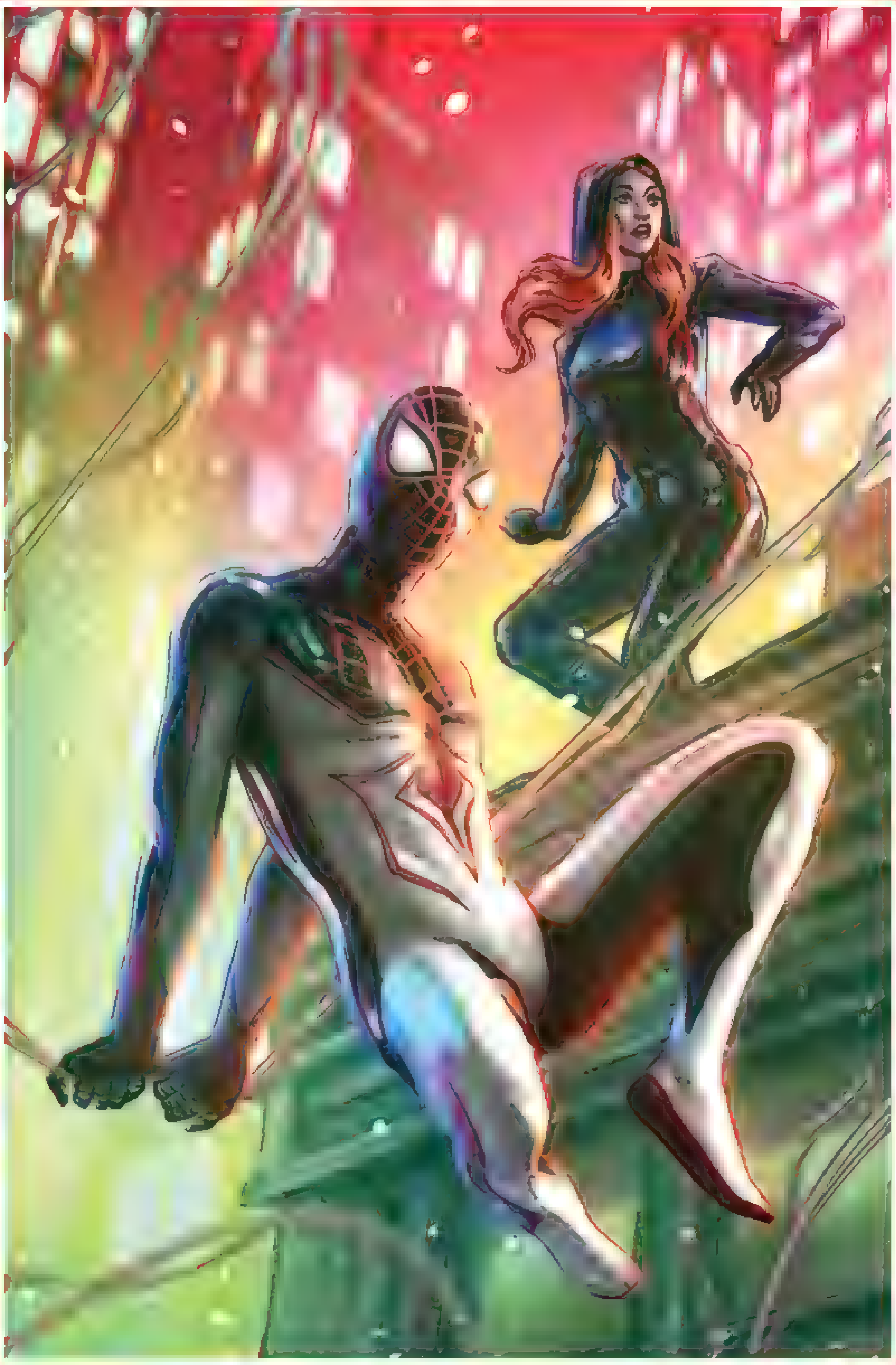
THWACK
LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE IS IN DANGER.
SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG.
HRRRKKK!
LIV!
HNNNGGGG!
YES, LITTLE TWIN →KOFF← BETTER SAVE HER.
FZZZKT
‹KNOCK HIM UNCONSCIOUS. NOW.›*
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.
LARS!
CRUNCH
‹YOU PREFER TO FIGHT ONE GIANT. I THINK I AGREE.›

‹STAY ON OPPOSITE SIDES.›
FZZZKT
ARRGHH!
FZZZKT
‹YES.›
HNNNNNG!
‹GO LOW.›
FZZZKT
‹STOP ACTING LIKE THIS IS MY FIRST FIGHT.›
‹IS THAT A YES?›
HRRRK!
‹...YES.›
FEELS LIKE HER SIZE *MUST* BE MAXING OUT.
SHE'S LEFT NOTHING FOR HER BROTHER...

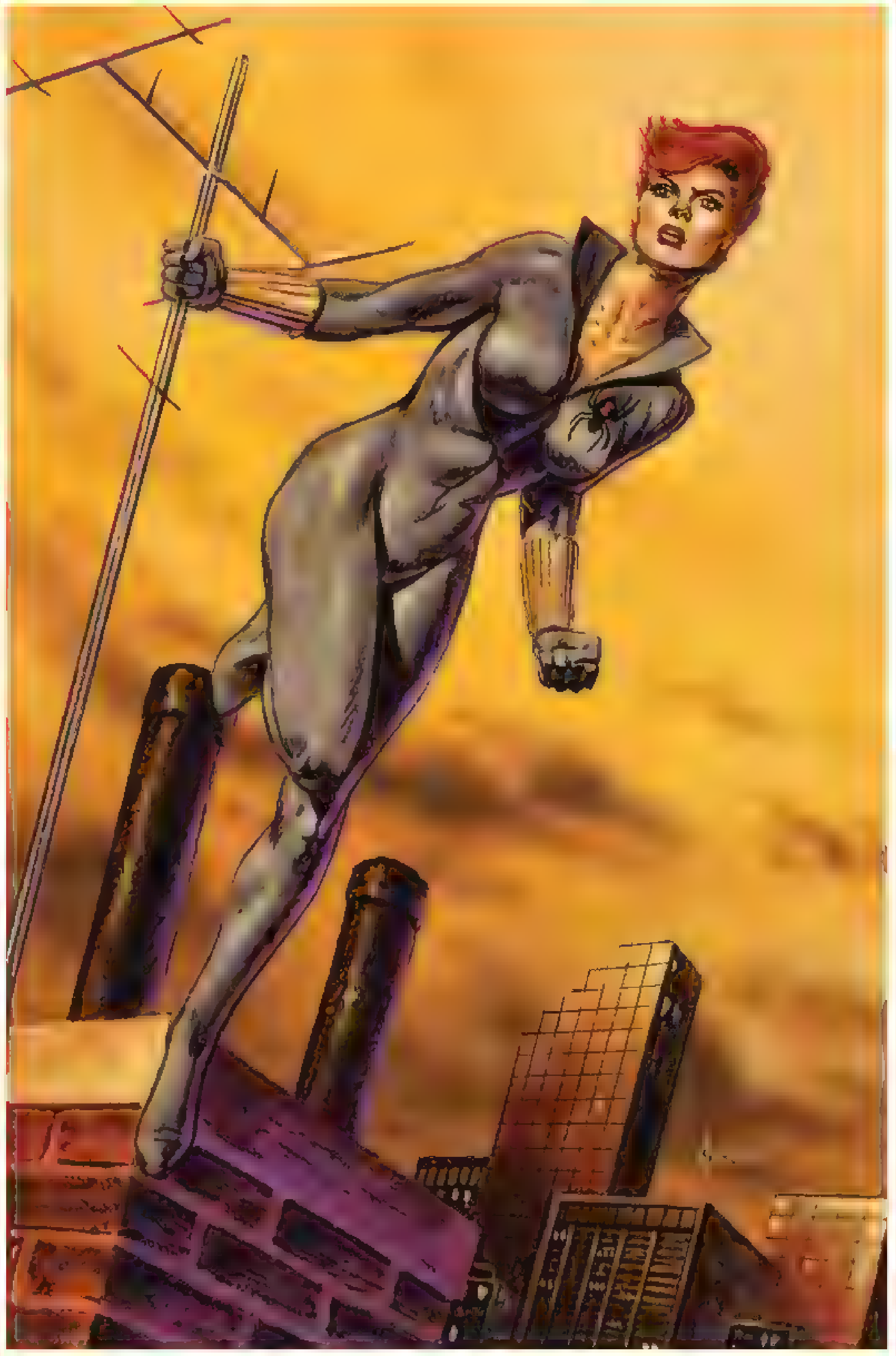
LIV... SSSSTOP.
LARS!
OH MY GOD.
I'M SO--
--SORRY.
WE'D LIKE THAT INFORMATION NOW.
ALL OF IT.

WE ALWAYS INTENDED TO. JUST COULDN'T--
--RESIST A CHANCE TO FIGHT SOME--
--OF THE BEST.
"SOME OF"? *PFFFT.*
UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT NOW THAT THAT'S OUT OF THE WAY, I'D APPRECIATE THE INFORMATION. AND KNOW THAT IF YOU LIE TO ME, I'LL BE BACK, AND IN A MUCH LESS FORGIVING MOOD.
YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING AT THE FORTHCOMING ***GOLDEN GATE GALA.*** A ONE-OF-A-KIND, EXCLUSIVE EVENT. YOU'VE NEVER--
--EXPERIENCED ANYTHING LIKE THIS. BUT SOME OF THE THINGS GOING ON THERE ARE...***UNSAVORY.*** WE DO NOT APPROVE. WHICH IS--
--WHY WE ARE HAPPY TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOU. AS PEOPLE WITH POWERS OURSELVES, WE DON'T LIKE SEEING--
--OTHERS WITH POWERS ABUSED AND MANIPULATED. IT IS WRONG. BUT ALSO, IF THEY COME FOR THEM--
--HOW LONG UNTIL THEY COME FOR US?
YES. YOU SHOULD PUT A STOP TO IT. WE WOULD LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.
PUT A STOP TO THE GOLDEN GATE GALA ITSELF?
NO, TO THE CRIMES THAT IT HIDES.
THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GO DEEPER THAN THAT--THEY HAVE TOO MUCH TO LOSE. BUT THIS IS ENOUGH.
THANK YOU.
AND YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT APOGEE... THERE'S MORE THERE.
THIS AFFECTS HIM TOO.
HE'S INVOLVED?
NOT BY CHOICE.
SO, CONFIRMATION THAT HE'S ALIVE AND ALSO THAT I *DID* MISS SOMETHING. A MISTAKE I'LL HAVE TO CORRECT.

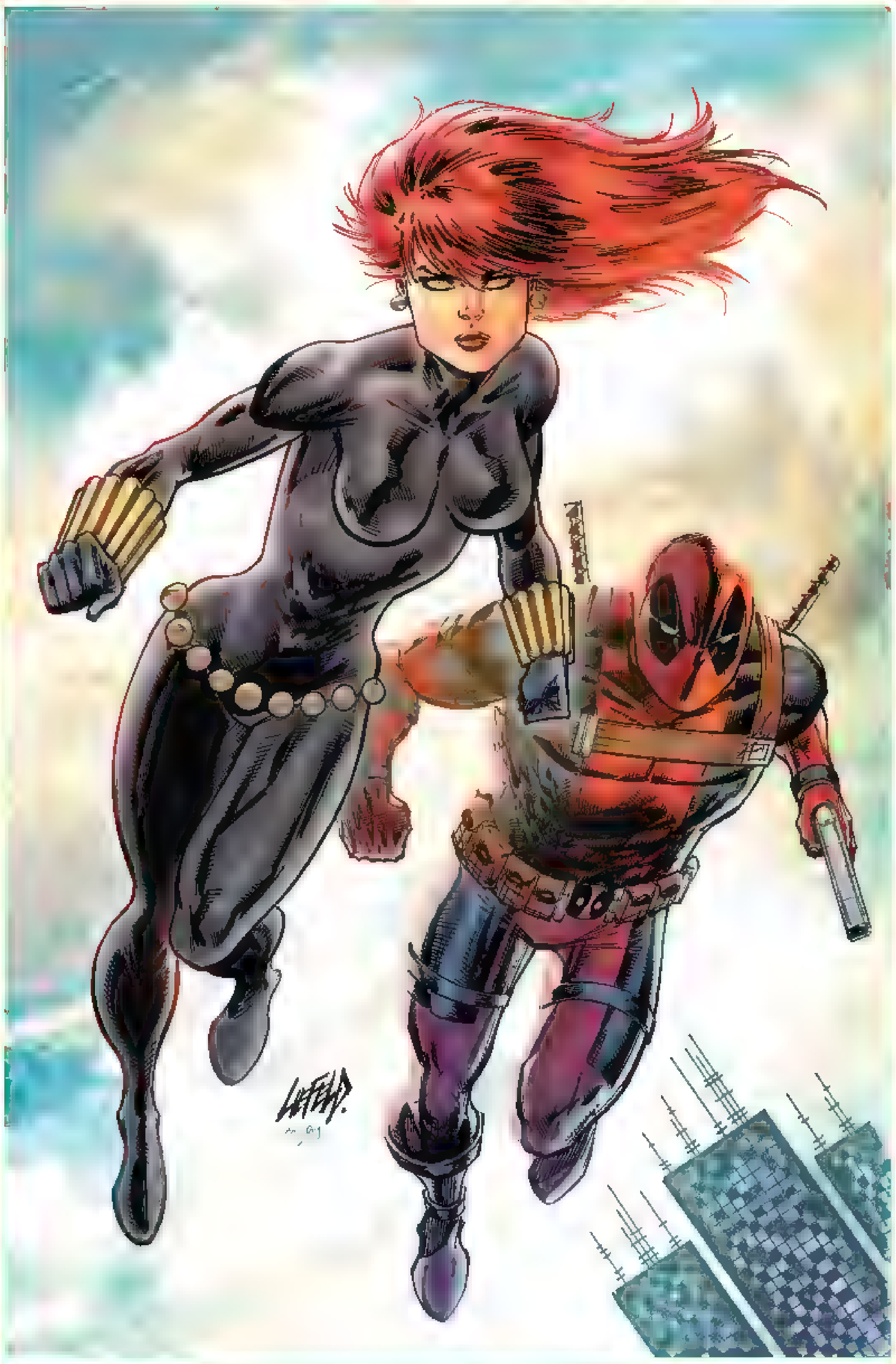
WELL, WE WANTED TO FIGHT--
--THEM. AND SO WE DID. ALWAYS GOOD TO--
--KNOW WHERE YOU STAND. STILL, A BIT OF--
--INJURY TO OUR PRIDE. YES.
MAKES THIS NEXT TASK A--
--BIT MORE ENJOYABLE THOUGH. SINCE WE'RE--
--HAVING SOME PETTY FEELINGS.
I HATE THEM.
I DON'T KNOW. IT WAS KIND OF NICE HOW CLOSE THEY WERE.
GROSS.
IS IT GROSS TO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE?
MOSTLY YES.
YOU TALK A BIG GAME, YELENA BELOVA, BUT I'VE SEEN YOUR HEART.
PFFT.
LIV, THIS NUMBER IS FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY.
YES, WELL... WE'VE SENT YOU SOMETHING--
--FUN. THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT A--
--HEADS-UP. SEEING AS IT'S ALSO QUITE DEADLY.
HOW MANY?
AT LEAST TWO.
WHEN?
I WOULD SAY--
--SOON.



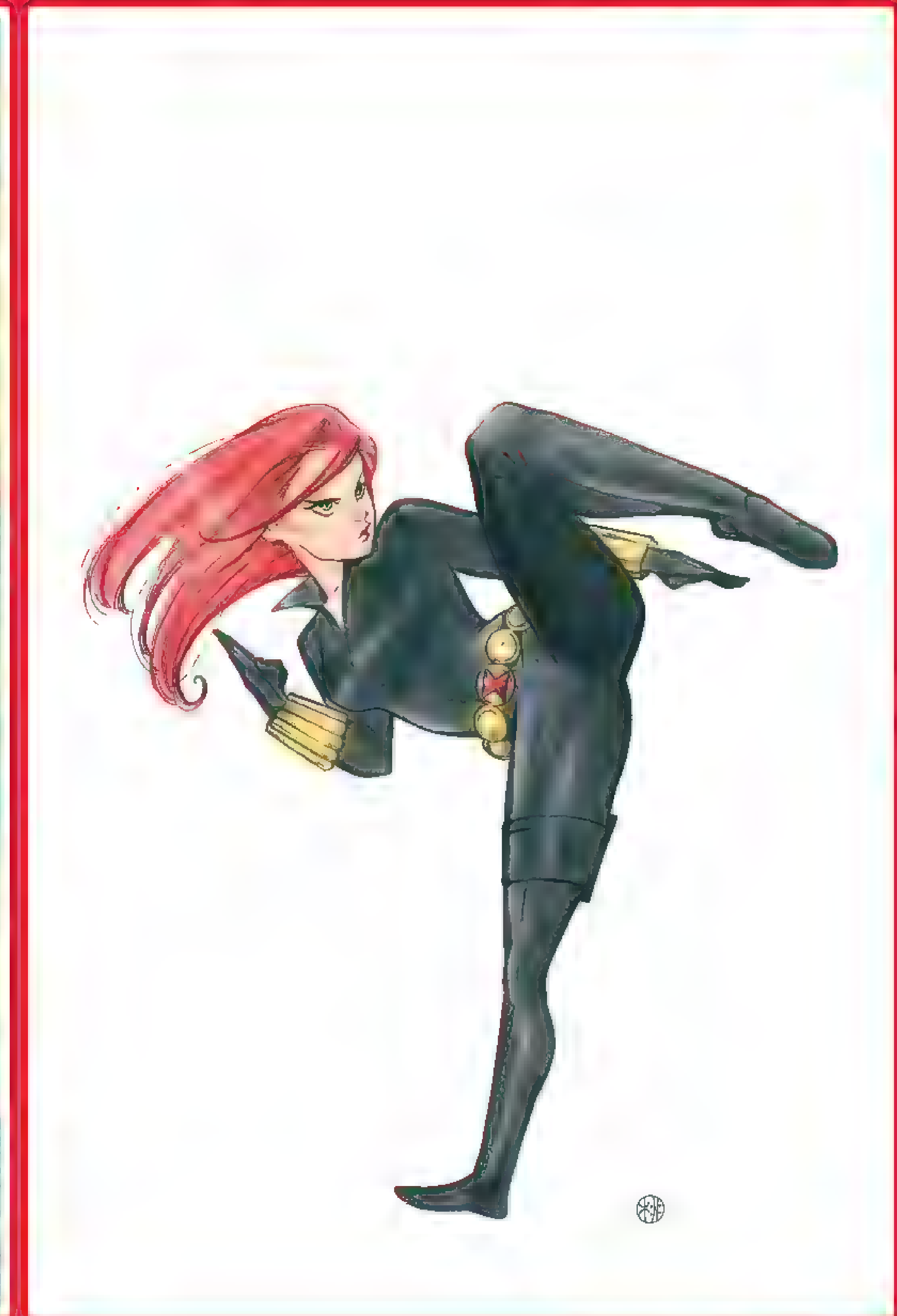
#11 MILES MORALES:
SPIDER-MAN 10TH ANNIVERSARY VARIANT BY
EJIWA "EDGE" EBENEBE



#12 MARVEL MASTERPIECES VARIANT BY **JOE JUSKO**



#13 DEADPOOL 30TH ANNIVERSARY VARIANT BY
ROB LIEFELD



#13 VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

TWELVE

AGAIN, AGAIN.
REALLY? THAT'S FIVE TIMES, DUCKLING.
MORE.
BABY.
...
NAT...
...JAMES.

KRRRKK
...
NAT--
--IT'S *ME.*
...SORRY.
IT'S OKAY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN SO CLOSE...

...OR BEEN SO QUIET.
IS IT TIME?
THEY'RE STILL EATING.
THEN WHY AM I AWAKE?
WE HAVE TO TALK.
NATASHA.
I WON'T DO IT AGAIN, JAMES.
THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH.
...
I'M SORRY.

WHY DID YOU LOOK FOR JAMES AND STEVIE? YOU PROMISED ME.
I HAD TO MOVE THEM, IT WAS DISRUPTIVE.
THEY'RE OKAY?
YES. WHY DID YOU DO THIS?
I...I WANTED TO MAKE SURE THEY WERE REALLY SAFE. IF *MY* PEOPLE COULD FIND THEM, THEN YOU DIDN'T DO YOUR JOB WELL ENOUGH.
IS THAT ALL?
...NO.
I WANTED TO SEE THEM.
HOW MUCH BIGGER IS HE? DOES HE KNOW ANY NEW WORDS? DOES HE STILL LOVE DUCKS AND CARS AND SHARKS AND WAFFLES? IS HE STILL AFRAID OF GIRAFFES?
DOES HE REMEMBER ME?
HE STILL LOVES DUCKS AND SHARKS AND WAFFLES.
AND HE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOU.

BLACK WIDOW
WINTER SOLDIER
WHITE WIDOW
SPIDER-GIRL
HAWKEYE
LUCY NGUYEN
IT'S ABOUT TIME.
WE'RE TWENTY MINUTES EARLY.
WELL...I DID NOT KNOW THAT. IT SEEMED LATE. FELT LATE.
EAT MORE EGG ROLLS, BARTON.
YOU SAY THAT LIKE IT'S A PUNISHMENT.
DEPARTURE TIME IS 1800 HOURS, SO LET'S GET INTO IT.
THAT'S 5PM.
ACTUALLY, IT'S 6PM.
I WAS TESTING YOU. WELL DONE.
I LIKE THE COSTUME, KID.
UH. THANKS?
MAYBE NEEDS A BIGGER LOGO.
IGNORE HIM, LUCY. CLINT, FOCUS!
OKAY. WE'VE RUN THIS A COUPLE WAYS, AND EACH TIME, TRYING TO *HIDE* WHO WE ARE DOESN'T WORK...

"SO WE'RE JUST GONNA GO *ALL* IN WITH *DRAMA.*
THE GOLDEN GATE GALA.
ANNUAL BENEFIT TO RAISE MONEY FOR ENDANGERED ANIMALS.
"DRAWING THE EYE CAN BE ALMOST AS USEFUL TO US HERE AS BEING UNSEEN...
"WE HAVE TO ASSUME THE TWINS SOLD US OUT, IN WHICH CASE THE PEOPLE WHO MATTER KNOW WE'RE COMING...
"...AND WILL BE LOOKING FOR US."

WITH THE WAY THESE PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT US, I'M NOT SURE WHY WE BOTHERED WITH THE FANCY THREADS... MIGHT AS WELL BE NAKED.
DON'T TEMPT ME.
THIS WAS NOT A NAKED PARTY I WAS INVITED TO.
DON'T BE A SQUARE, BUCKY.
SQUARE? YOU SOUND AS OLD AS I AM.
HILARIOUS.
I'VE GOT EYES ON THE TWINS. TEN O'CLOCK.
MARKED.
ANYA AND LUCY, MOVE INTO POSITION TWO.

CUTTING IN.
MMMHMMM.
CLINT, MOVING TO POSITION TWO NOW.
ARE YOU STILL ANGRY WITH ME?
I WAS NEVER ANGRY.
THEN WHAT IS IT?
YOU HAVE TO STOP PUTTING US IN BOXES, NATASHA.
I HAVE MANY QUESTIONS. WHO IS "US" AND WHAT ARE THE BOXES?
CLINT'S THE GUY YOU WANT IN *PUBLIC*, HE DOES WELL IN THESE SITUATIONS. I GET IT, IT'S FINE--
UH. JAMES. YOU'VE ***MET*** CLINT. HE'S TERRIBLE IN THESE SITUATIONS.
HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT A CUMMERBUND IS. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHICH FORK TO USE.
HE KNOWS TWO DANCES, ONLY ONE OF WHICH IS APPROPRIATE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.
BUT PEOPLE KNOW HIS ***FACE.*** HE'S CLINT BARTON...HAWKEYE...AVENGER...HIMBO AT LARGE, AT LEAST TO THE IGNORANT PUBLIC...

...SO THAT WORKS FOR THE **PERSONA** I'M TRYING TO ESTABLISH HERE--
YOU KNOW I CAN HEAR YOU GUYS THROUGH THE COMMS, RIGHT?
WE KNOW.
...COOL.
OUR FACES SPLASHED ACROSS PAGE SIX...THAT WORKS FOR US RIGHT NOW.
OH.
HE'S ALSO GOT THE SHARPEST **EYES** I'VE EVER SEEN, AND CONSIDERING I KNOW BOTH YOU AND ME, THAT'S SAYING A LOT.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T NEED YOU TOO.
YOU'RE **BOTH** HERE FOR A REASON. I **NEED** YOU BOTH.
*THE HOST IS INCOMING. I REPEAT, **THE HOST** IS INCOMING.*
CRAP. LADIES, YOU BETTER BE IN POSITION THREE BY NOW.
CONFIRMED.
EXCELLENT. PROCEED AS DISCUSSED.

CUTTING IN, I'M AFRAID.
EITHER THE JIG IS UP, OR THIS IS GOING PERFECTLY. GOING TO NEED ANOTHER MINUTE TO KNOW FOR SURE.
YOU DON'T MIND, DO YOU?
OF COURSE NOT.
YOU'RE THE BELLE OF THE BALL, NATASHA. NOBODY CAN TAKE THEIR EYES OFF YOU.
I'M FLATTERED.
OF COURSE WE SEE A LOT OF SUPER RICH AROUND HERE. A LOT OF SUPER BEAUTIFUL TOO, EVEN A FAIR AMOUNT OF SUPER FAMOUS. BUT SUPER *HERO* IS RARE.
I SHOULD HOPE.
YES, THIS ONE LIKES TO PLAY WITH HER FOOD. REMINDS ME OF THE TWINS--THEY WERE PROBABLY RAISED IN THE SAME UBER PRIVILEGED CIRCLES...

I SEE SOME LIGHT AHEAD.
FINALLY.
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE ONLY GOT TO WEAR OUR GOWNS FOR LIKE FIVE MINUTES.
EH. I PREFER WORK CLOTHES ANYWAY. LESS BIND-Y.
ANYA. YOUR SUIT IS SKINTIGHT.
MAYBE I MEAN LESS PINCH-Y?
ONE OF THOSE CORSET WIRES WAS JABBING ME IN THE RIB.
WAIT. I HEAR VOICES.
IT SOUNDS LIKE...IS THAT AN AUCTION?
MAGNIFICENT IN ITS COLORS AND EXCEEDINGLY RARE, THIS NOBLE ITEM HAS EXTRA STRONG JAWS AND A VOICE THAT CAN SHATTER GLASS.
THOUGH THERE IS A SHORT LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR THIS PARTICULAR EXOTIC, IT REMAINS HIGH IMPACT FOR THE TIME LEFT... AND IF YOU TURN TO PAGE NINE IN YOUR BROCHURE, YOU'LL SEE SOME IMPRESSIVE STATS.
WHAT THE HELL?
OF ALL THE THINGS I EXPECTED TONIGHT, SUPER-RICH JACKASSES BIDDING ON RARE EXOTIC ANIMALS WAS NOT EVEN A CONTENDER.

I'M SORRY, COULD YOU REPEAT THAT?
THESE SUPER-RICH DUDES ARE BIDDING ON EXOTIC BIRDS OF SOME KIND.
WAIT...THIS ONE'S A FREAKING LIGER. I THOUGHT THOSE THINGS WERE *FICTIONAL.*
I SAID, "NOBODY THOUGHT YOU WOULD DARE TO SHOW."
THIS IS MY NEW CITY, MY *PEOPLE*-- HOW COULD I MISS SUCH AN EVENT?
I COMPLETELY AGREE. I'M GLAD WE SEE THINGS THE SAME WAY.
THIS LIGER IS GOING FOR A MILLION BUCKS. WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?
HOW MUCH?
UP TO A *MILLION POINT TWO* NOW.
AHEM. I MEAN TO SAY, HOW MUCH HAVE YOU RAISED FOR CHARITY SO FAR?
NEARLY 200,000 HAS BEEN RAISED FOR WILDLIFE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION TONIGHT.
SUCH A WORTHY CAUSE.
ISN'T IT, THOUGH?
NAT, THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THE WAY THEY'RE DESCRIBING THEM...
THERE'S NO WAY THESE ONE PERCENTERS ARE PAYING 1.2 MILLION FOR AN ANIMAL, I DON'T CARE HOW RARE IT IS. SOMETHING ELSE IS GOING ON HERE.

SKRREEECH
JAMES.
I HEARD.
TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY... OR SO I HEAR?
I LOVE IT.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT.
YELENA.
CLINT. CLINT, DO YOU COPY?
DAMMIT.

WE HAVE LOST THEM.
1° FLOOR
WHAT WAS THE LAST THING YOU HEARD?
FROM BARTON? "THE HOST IS INCOMING." FROM THE GIRLS? BEFORE THE SKREEECH, IT WAS LUCY MENTIONING THE WAY THE ANIMALS WERE BEING DESCRIBED.
I HEARD THE SAME.
I AM SURPRISED THE VIPs ARE IN THE BASEMENT.
MAYBE IT HAS MORE ACCESS POINTS, ESCAPE ROUTES?
BUT WHEN HAVE YOU EVER KNOWN THE VERY RICH TO BE MORE CONCERNED WITH *PRACTICALITIES* THAN WITH THE LUXURY OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS?
SHE'S NOT WRONG.
WHAT WAITS FOR US BEHIND THAT DOOR?
FIRE ALARM BUTTON

WHAMMO
DAMMIT. FULL RESISTANCE--VERY WEIRD, ANIMAL-THEMED RESISTANCE--AND NO SIGN OF CLINT, ANYA, OR LUCY.
PLAN A IS OFFICIALLY SHOT.
PLAN B IT IS THEN.
HOPE YOU GUYS HAVE DENTAL.

FLIP
NEXT TIME YOU WISH TO USE ME AS A POMMEL HORSE, PLEASE ASK.
NO TIME.
THIS IS ALWAYS YOUR STORY.
THUNK
BLAM
KRAK
GAH!
CRUNCH
HNNNGG!
BLAM
BLAM
THWIIIICK
FZZAKT

EVEN IN PLAN B, IT WAS NEVER SUPPOSED TO BE YELENA AND I ON OUR OWN.
BLAM BLAM
BLAMBLAM
WHERE'S CLINT? EVEN JAMES SHOULD HAVE JOINED US BY NOW.
THUNK
THUNK
BLAM
BLAM
I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING THAT THERE'S SOMETHING EVEN WORSE COMING...
...SOMETHING THAT I COULDN'T HAVE ANTICIPATED...
FZZZZRKT
HRRRKK!
PUSH

KRAK
GRAA--!
...SOMETHING THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING...
...OR SOMEONE.
THE LIVING BLADE.
WHAT? RIDICULOUS. THE *LIVING BLADE* IS A MYTH.
NO. HE'S NOT.

THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING.
CLINT!
OH GOD. NO. I CAN'T--I CAN'T DO THIS AGAIN...
HELLO, WIDOW.
HELLO, WIDOW.
MADRIPOOR.
YEARS AGO.

#13 VARIANT BY **RAFAEL PIMENTEL**

BLACK WIDOW
黑寡妇
MADRIPOO
奇迹漫画
危险
1/F & 2/F
决斗
THIRTEEN
AH!

MADRIPOOR.
YEARS AGO.
I AM NOT UNIQUE AMONG MY KIND.
PINNNNG
I'VE HAD ENEMIES ALMOST AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER.
SHINNNNG
AND MORE THAN ONE NEMESIS IN MY TIME.
SKRANGG

IT'S SO NATURAL AS TO ALMOST BE BORING.
SKREEE
KRAK
FEAR IS THE REAL ENEMY.
FEAR WILL GET YOU KILLED FASTER AND MORE RELIABLY THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

SO YOU CONQUER IT EARLY.

BUT THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING THAT GETS THROUGH. SOME LITTLE THING THAT CAN PIERCE YOUR ARMOR.
SHHFFFT
SOME THING...SOME *PERSON* WHO MAKES ALL THE ARMOR YOU'VE ASSEMBLED...OBSOLETE.
THE BOOGEYMAN.
MINE WAS *THE LIVING BLADE.*
SLASH

A NAME I HAD HALF CONSIDERED A MYTH.
FZZZHTT
THUNK
HNNNNG!
THIS IS NO MYTH.
THWACK
SOMEWHERE DEEP INSIDE US, WHERE THE FEAR STILL LIVES AND GROWS, WE'RE ALL JUST CHILDREN--DESPITE ALL OF OUR CONQUERING.
CHILDREN RUNNING FROM OUR OWN DEMONS, HOPING THEY'LL NEVER FIND US, NEVER CATCH US.
HHHFFFFFT.
NEVER KILL US.

SWORD VS. *KNIFE* ARE NOT ODDS I LIKE, EVEN UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.
THESE ARE NOT NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.
SWWWIPE
AND HE'S *AMBIDEXTROUS.*
OF *COURSE* HE IS.
SLICE
I AM RELEGATED TO *SMALLER* WINS.
KRAK
SOME MIGHT CALL THEM *LOSSES.*

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION.
MY MISSION WAS STANDARD RECON... NOTHING FLASHY.
ZZKT
SOMEHOW OUR DIRECTIVES MUST BE IN CONFLICT.
=HSSSS=
SLUUUIIICCCE
CRUNCH
CONFLICTING DIRECTIVES HE APPARENTLY FEELS *VERY* STRONGLY ABOUT.

BUT HE'S SILENT AS A STONE. NOT EXACTLY WHAT I'D CALL A "SHARER."
FWASSHHSSS
AND THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE. I PREFER TO KEEP MY OWN COUNSEL AS WELL.
IF I CAN JUST GET SOME DISTANCE...
...MAYBE HE WILL LET ME GO... NO LONGER CONSIDERING ME A THREAT TO WHATEVER *HE'S* DOING.

IT'S WORTH A TRY.
FWWTTTT
THUNK
SNAP
HE CUT THE LINE.
IT WAS FOOLISH OF ME TO BELIEVE THE LIVING BLADE WOULD LET HIS QUARRY ESCAPE.

CRASH
I AM MARKED FOR DEATH.
KRAK
ARRGH!
DAMAGE TO MY RIGHT SHOULDER IS SEVERE. I COULD LOSE RANGE OF MOTION AT ANY MOMENT.
BLOOD LOSS FROM THE TORSO SLICE IS A CONCERN, BUT MANAGEABLE SO LONG AS THIS DOESN'T GO ON MUCH LONGER.
RIGHT LEG IS GONNA BE A PROBLEM THOUGH.
<UH. ARE YOU OKAY?>*
<YES. YOU SHOULD LEAVE.>
<UHHHH...>
*TRANSLATED FROM FILIPINO.

IF RUNNING IS NOT AN OPTION, THEN I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO ON THE *OFFENSIVE*.
SMASH
FZZZWAT
THE STRENGTH OF THE MAN... IT'S LIKE TRYING TO WRESTLE STEEL CABLE.
OR TRYING TO WRESTLE A BLADE ITSELF. PERHAPS THAT IS WHERE THE NAME COMES FROM.
ARRRGHHH!

HNNNG!
MY WHOLE RIGHT SIDE IS COMPROMISED NOW. AND THERE ARE TOO MANY INNOCENT *BYSTANDERS* HERE. THEY NEED TO BE RUNNING AWAY MUCH FASTER.
LET'S HELP THEM GET A MOVE ON.
SMASH
SMASH
SMASH

BOUGHT MYSELF *SECONDS* AT BEST...
NOT NEARLY ENOUGH TIME TO FIND A MORE DEFENSIBLE POSITION...LET ALONE A WINNING ONE.
<GET OUT!>
5
5
HERE WE GO.

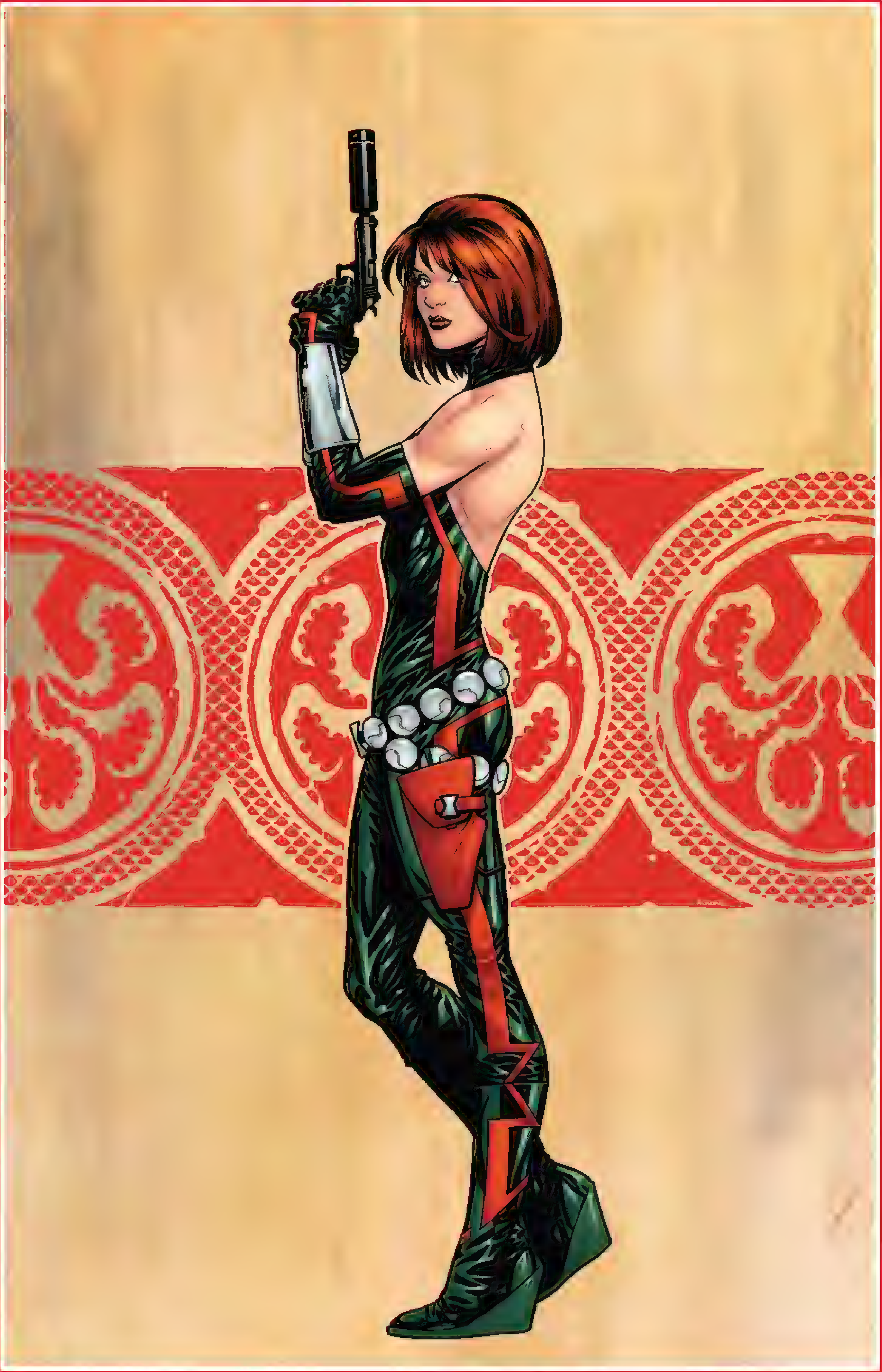
K-TANG
TOSS
BONNNGG
WHAM

SMASH
TEMPTING TO PICK THAT BLADE UP. BUT IF I DO, HE'LL DEFINITELY NEVER STOP COMING FOR ME.
<OH!>
<APOLOGIES.>

I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED. THIS IS THE KIND OF THING YOU ALWAYS FIND IN THESE BACK ROOMS.
RICH MEN GETTING RICHER ON THE BACKS--THE *SUFFERING*--OF OTHERS.
<WHO THE HELL IS THIS?!>*
<IT IS... THE *BLACK WIDOW.*>
<NO.>
*TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH.
<W-WE WANT NO T-TROUBLE, BLACK WIDOW.>
<YOU SHOULD RUN NOW.>

THIS...WAS NOT MY MISSION.
IS IT THE *LIVING BLADE'S?* AND I GOT IN THE WAY?
<CAN YOU GIRLS RUN? IS THERE SOMEWHERE YOU CAN ALL GO?>*
<IF WE RUN, THEY WILL ONLY TAKE US AGAIN.>
*TRANSLATED FROM FILIPINO.
IT DOESN'T MATTER. I AM HERE *NOW.*
<STAY BACK... HIDE IF YOU CAN. DO NOT COME OUT UNTIL IT IS SAFE.>

UNTIL NEXT TIME, WIDOW.
I LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.
BUT I AM **MARKED** FROM THIS MOMENT FORWARD.
MANY THINGS CAN GET ME BEFORE HE COMES BACK...
BUT HE **WILL** COME BACK. THERE IS NO DOUBT OF THAT.
I HAVE BOUGHT MYSELF TIME-- NOTHING MORE.



#13 DEVIL'S REIGN VARIANT BY **MIKE McKONE** & **CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**

FOURTEEN

SAN FRANCISCO AGAIN.
THE LIVING BLADE.
I...I CAN'T BEAT HIM.
YOU UNDERSTAND, OF COURSE, THAT I CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO LIVE THIS TIME.
YES.
SHINNNGGGG
RUN!
THIS WILL HAPPEN FAST.

WHAM
OOOF.
KRAKK

SLIIIICE
=HSSS=
TING
KRAK
TING
CLICK
TIK
TIK

BOOM
KLANG
STOP. SLOW DOWN.
CONCENTRATE.
YELENA WILL DO WHAT SHE KNOWS TO DO. IT'S FINE.
NOW *MOVE.*

ELSEWHERE IN THE BUILDING.
IT MAKES NO SENSE, LUCY, MY POWERS COME FROM A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SOURCE THAN YOURS--HOW CAN THE *COLLARS* WORK ON *BOTH* OF US?
I DON'T KNOW, ANYA.
ANY LUCK WITH THE LOCK?
NOT REALLY.
YOU CAN PLAY WITH THAT LOCK ALL YOU LIKE--
--GIRL, BUT IT'S NO USE--
--THOSE LOCKS ARE BEYOND YOUR SIMPLE SKILL.
OH, SHUT UP. YOU *TWINS* HAVE SAID NOTHING PRODUCTIVE SINCE WE WOKE UP.
OH GOD. ANYA--
--PLEASE TELL ME THAT'S NOT A DEAD HAWKEYE.

MAYBE HE'S FAKING?
LIKE IT'S PART OF THE PLAN?
IF IT'S PART OF THE PLAN, WOULDN'T BLACK WIDOW HAVE TOLD US ABOUT IT?
I DON'T THINK SHE TELLS ANYONE *EVERYTHING*.
YOUR FRIEND IS DEAD OR--
--WILL BE SOON.
WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOURSELVES USEFUL AND TRY TO GET *OUT* OF HERE?!
YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TRIED... YOU'RE JUST SITTING THERE DOING INSULTING COLOR COMMENTARY ON THIS NIGHTMARE, WAITING FOR WHATEVER HORRORS AWAIT US NEXT.
OOOH. LOOK WHO HAS A BACKBONE. WHAT--
--A TREAT.
IGNORE THEM, LUCE.
NO. THEY'RE IN THIS THE SAME AS US. MAYBE IF WE WORK TOGETHER--
STOP BEING SO NAIVE, GIRL. *THE HOST* KNOWS OUR STRENGTH, SHE--
--WOULDN'T PUT US IN A CAGE THAT WE COULD BREAK OUT OF.
WAIT. DON'T YOU *SHARE* YOUR STRENGTH?
YES, BUT SHE STILL KNOWS OUR *LIMITS*.
BUT WHAT IF ONE OF YOU TAKES *ALL* THE STRENGTH?
GUESS NOW WE'LL SEE HOW *YOUR* BACKBONES ARE.

YELENA? WHAT'S HAPPENED? EVERYONE MISSED THE RENDEZVOUS POINT AND NAT WENT DARK. I CAN'T RAISE THE OTHERS EITHER.
WE MUST GO. NOW.
WE ARE IN PLAN F NOW.
PLAN F?
OH. JOKES. YOU'RE MAKING JOKES?
SOMETIMES IT IS ALL YOU HAVE.
YELENA, WHAT'S HAPPENED?
SPIDER-GIRL, HAWKEYE, AND LUCY HAVE BEEN TAKEN. AND NATALIA...
WHAT?
SHE TOLD ME TO *RUN*... WHICH IS--
--CODE, I KNOW. WHAT WAS HAPPENING?
SHE SAID IT WAS--
--SHE SAID IT WAS *THE LIVING BLADE.*

WE HAVE TO--
NO. WE CANNOT!
JAMES, SHE SAID *RUN.*
WE HAVE THINGS WE *HAVE* TO DO NOW.
IS SHE--?
...
I DO NOT KNOW. I...I DO NOT EVEN KNOW IF SHE IS STILL ALIVE, JAMES.
OUR CONCERNS ARE ANYA, LUCY, AND BARTON NOW.
WE HAVE ROLES TO PLAY.
THEY ARE ROLES NATALIA DESIGNED.
AND...WE MUST RESPECT THAT.
MISSION FIRST. ALWAYS.
IT IS HOW WE SURVIVE.
AND WE TRUST NATALIA WILL DO THE SAME.

BLACK WIDOW TO TEAM, DOES ANYONE COPY?
SKREEEE
CLICK
CLICK
EXPLOSION MUST HAVE FRIED THE COMMS.
TRUST YELENA. SHE WILL DO WHAT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO DO. THEY ALL WILL.
BUT WHAT'S *HE* DOING HERE? WORKING WITH THE HOST OBVIOUSLY... BUT TO WHAT END?
I'M TRUSTING *YOU* TO DEAL WITH THIS.
THAT WAS NOT OUR ARRANGEMENT.
AND THINGS CHANGE. IT'S LITERALLY THE ONLY CONSTANT. READ A BOOK.
IF YOU, BREAK THIS DEAL, YOU WILL NOT BE HAPPY...IN THE END.

IS THAT A THREAT?
TAKE IT HOW YOU WILL.
HERE.
THAT IS *ALSO* NOT THE AGREEMENT.
FINE! IT WAS *THE STARFISH* YOU WANTED? TAKE IT! IT'S YOURS. JUST COVER ME UNTIL I GET OUT OF HERE. THE HELICOPTER IS ALREADY EN ROUTE.
AS THAT IS NOT A REVISION OF OUR TERMS, THEN YES, THIS I WILL DO.
OH MY GOD. THOSE CAGES ARE HER "RARE ANIMALS"... PEOPLE, *POWERED* PEOPLE.
AND IS THAT... OH NO. *CRAIG.*
CLICK
FAIR WARNING, THANKS TO THOSE PESKY WIDOWS, AFTER I'M SAFELY AWAY...
...I'LL BE ACTIVATING THE SELF-DESTRUCT ON THIS WHOLE DAMN THING.
I'M NOT SAYING THE BUILDING IS GOING TO ACTUALLY FALL DOWN, BUT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HERE. TRUST ME.
PFFT. BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF PRODUCT. WHAT A WASTE.

WE KNEW THE GALA WAS HIDING SOMETHING BIG, POSSIBLY INVOLVING *APOGEE* IN SOME WAY.
THIS IS BEYOND ANYTHING I IMAGINED...OR FEARED.
THIS IS NOT MY FAVORITE DAY.
YELENA? JAMES? DO EITHER OF YOU COPY?
BR-- --KING UP, NATAL--
YOU'RE BREAKING UP, BUT I'M GOING TO TALK ANYWAY IN HOPES YOU GET SOME OF IT.
THE HOST HAS A HELICOPTER EN ROUTE. WHEN SHE'S CLEAR, SHE'LL ACTIVATE SOME KIND OF SELF-DESTRUCT. YOU NEED TO STOP HER AND ALSO EVACUATE THE CIVILIANS.
I'M FOLLOWING THE LIVING BLADE AND HOPEFULLY FREEING LUCY, ANYA, CLINT, AND THE OTHERS...

YOU ARE ON THE HOST.
I'M ON THE HOST.
WAIT--REALLY? I ASSUMED YOU WOULD WANT THE HOST, YELENA.
I DO, BUT YOU ARE TOO POLITE, WINTER SOLDIER--
--CIVILIANS NEED A STERNER HAND.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
THIS IS NOT A DRILL! PROCEED TO THE NEAREST EXIT OR DIE!
I SAID, PROCEED TO EXIT OR DIE!
AHHHH!
AIIIIEEEE!
RUN!

AND YOU SWEAR TO ME THAT IF I DO THIS, YOU CAN REVIVE HIM?!
IF YOU GET ME OUT OF THIS CAGE AND THE COLLAR OFF, YES.
YOU'RE CERTAIN?!
I'VE DONE IT BEFORE.
LARS, ARE YOU--
--SURE? IF WE DON'T, WE'RE BOTH--
--DEAD ANYWAY.
OKAY.
KRAK
GRRRRRRR!

RRRRRAARGH!
HE'S DEAD. I CAN'T HEAR HIM ANYMORE.
LIV. HURRY. I'LL FIX HIM, I PROMISE.
ARRRRHHHHH!
RIIIIIIIPPPP
WHOA.

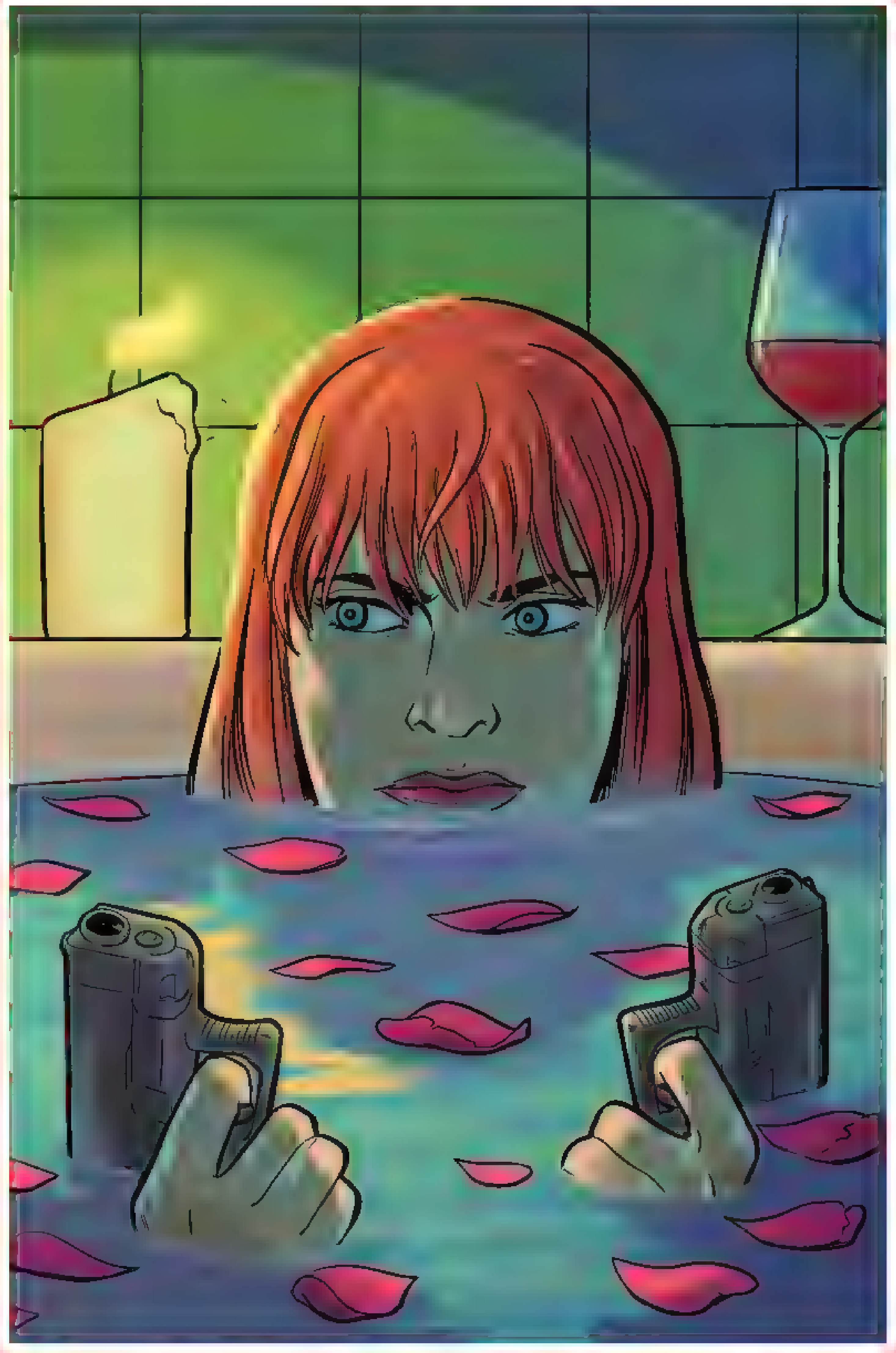
HOLD STILL.
UM, MAYBE WE--
QUIET.
CRUNCH
RIIIIIIIP
LARS. HOLD ON.
HELP HIM...
...PLEASE.

WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE HOST WAS MORE OF A KEYCARD KIND OF GIRL, BUT SOMETIMES THE *CLASSICS* ARE BEST, I SUPPOSE.
MAYBE SHE DOESN'T TRUST TECH OR SOMETHING.
I HOPE THE OTHERS HEARD ME. IF NOT, NONE OF THIS IS GOING TO MATTER MUCH.
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
THAT'S A GOOD SIGN.
BL-BLACK WIDOW?
HELLO, CRAIG.
I-IS IT REALLY YOU? AM I DREAMING THIS?
YOU ARE NOT. AND THE FIRE ALARM IS A GOOD THING, MEANS THE TEAM IS WORKING ON GETTING PEOPLE OUT.
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
SO THERE'S NO FIRE?
UNCLEAR. HOPEFULLY IT'S JUST WHAT YELENA IS USING TO EVACUATE CIVILIANS.
BUT I CAN'T STAY, I NEED YOU TO LET THE OTHERS OUT.
CHECK IN THE OFFICE TO SEE IF YOU CAN FIND A MASTER SWITCH FOR THOSE POWER SUPPRESSION COLLARS, OKAY?
OKAY. WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M GOING AFTER A MAN CALLED THE LIVING BLADE, AND IF YOU SEE HIM...RUN THE OTHER WAY.
GOOD TIP.

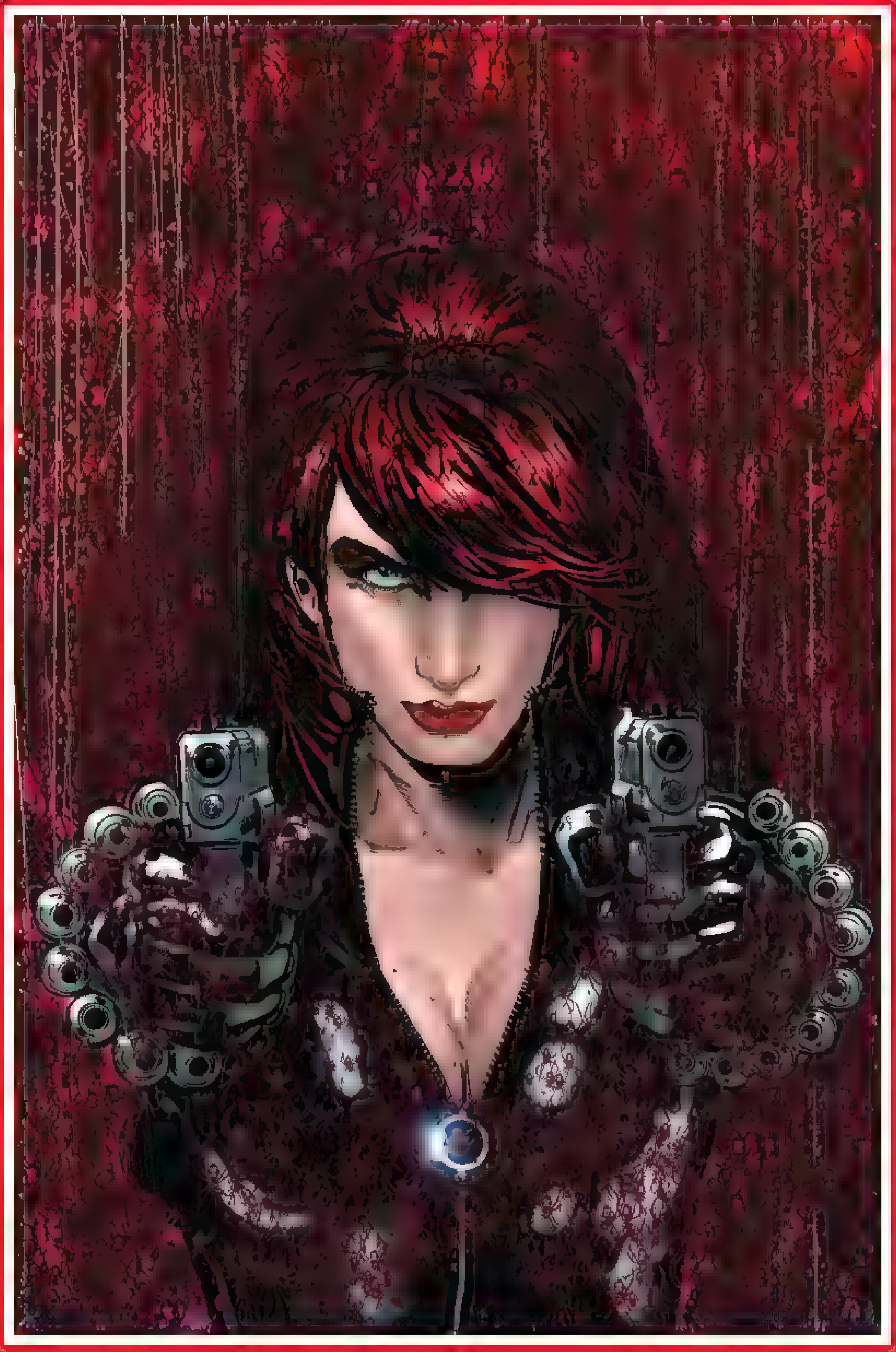
SLAM
CAN'T IMAGINE IT WILL HOLD HIM; BUT HAD--
CLICK
SHUNNNNK
WELL, THAT WAS FAST.
CRASH

WILL YOU RUN THIS TIME TOO?
NO.
FZZZT
FZZZT
FZZZT
CLICK
CLANG
FZZZT
FZZZT
WHRRRR
I--I DON'T HAVE IT.
SOMETIMES YOU CAN JUST FEEL IT.

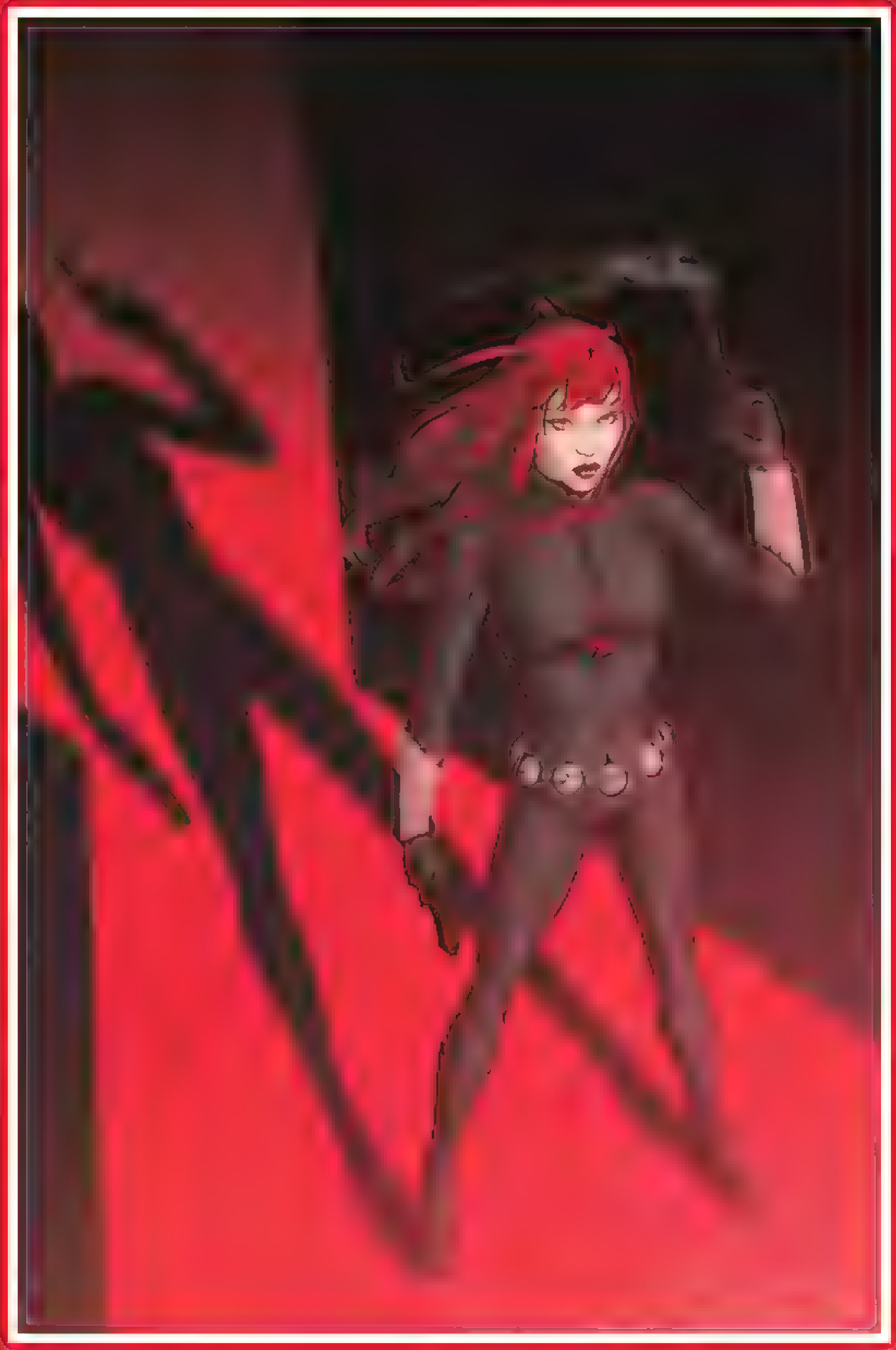
AND THEN YOU *LOSE.*
SLICE



#14 VARIANT BY **NATACHA BUSTOS**



#14 VARIANT BY
PHIL JIMENEZ & MARTE GRACIA



#15 VARIANT BY **W. SCOTT FORBES**

BLACK WIDOW
15
AH!

FIFTEEN

SOMETIMES SHOCK CAN BE A BLESSING.
KEEPS THE PAIN AT BAY.
KEEPS YOU FROM UNDERSTANDING HOW BAD EVERYTHING REALLY IS.
HOW MUCH BLOOD THERE IS.
SHNNNNG
STILL FIGHTING. I EXPECTED NO LESS FROM YOU, WIDOW.
KRRRRCKKK
BUT YOU ARE BEATEN.
I WILL MAKE IT QUICK.
I HAVE NOTHING LEFT.

CLINT?
WHAT'S HE--?
"BOMB."
FWLP

SHFFF
THUNK
BOOM

=KOFF= NAT?
HNNNNG.
NAT...
THANKS FOR COMING FOR ME...EVEN THOUGH THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU WERE *SUPPOSED* TO DO.
WH-WHERE-- =KOFF=--ARE THE OTHERS?
I DON'T KNOW... LET'S FOCUS ON YOU FOR NOW.
=KOFF=
OH MY GOD.
=KOFF=
=KOFF KOFF=

C'MON, C'MON.
BZZZZZRKKRT
IT'S NOT WORKING!
IT'S GOING TO WORK!
UH. WE GOT COMPANY. LIV, YOU GOTTA GET MY *POWER DAMPENER* OFF.
LEAVE ME ALONE!
BZZZZZKRKT
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF SHE BRINGS YOUR BROTHER BACK IF THESE GUYS KILL US!
JUST GRAB THE COLLAR AND--
CLICK
OOOORRRRR IT WILL COME OFF LIKE MAGIC. MAYBE HAWKEYE GOT OUT? OR MAYBE THAT ALARM WE HEARD MEANS THE BUILDING REALLY *IS* ON FIRE?
LUCY, I MIGHT NEED YOUR--
STOP DISTRACTING HER!
HRRRKKKK! =KOFF!=

THWAP
YOU KNOW WHAT SPIDERWEBS LOVE? GUNS. TOTALLY DESTROYING GUNS. IT'S THEIR FAVE.
THWAP
WHEW.
THAT WAS CLOSE.
WE ARE--
--NEVER DOING THAT--
--AGAIN.
LUCKY YOU, WEBS LOVE FACES ALMOST AS MUCH AS GUNS!
THWIP
SMACK
KRAK
NICE WORK, LUCY.
YOU TOO.
WE SHOULD HURRY... FIND THE OTHERS, RIGHT?
YEAH. HEY, LIV, LARS, ANY CHANCE--
ANNNND THEY'RE GONE.
YOU'RE SURPRISED?
NOT REALLY. LET'S GO FIND THE OTHERS.

NAT? NAT! HEY! STAY WITH ME!
C'MON, HOLD ON FOR ME, BABY. WE'RE GONNA FIX THIS. JUST HOLD ON.
THANK YOU, CLINT. FOR SO MUCH.
Y-YOU AND JAMES...MAKE SURE NOTHING HAPPENS TO STEVIE, OKAY? P-PROMISE ME?
DON'T--DON'T EVEN START TALKING LIKE THAT. THIS IS COMPLETELY SOLVABLE. MISTY KNIGHT HAS A FREAKING VIBRANIUM ARM, FOR GOD'S SAKE! YOU THINK WE CAN'T GET YOU ONE TOO?
YOU THINK TONY STARK WON'T TEAR DOWN THE DAMN MOON TO MAKE YOU WHOLE AGAIN?!
PLEASE, NAT. I CAN'T--I CAN'T LOSE YOU AGAIN. PLEASE.
WE--WE CAN HELP!
WELL, HE CAN.

YOU CAN FIX THIS?
MAYBE. DO YOU HAVE THE ARM?
...I DO.
THAT'S GOOD. I CAN REGROW THE ARM, BUT IT TAKES TIME. REATTACHING IS FASTER... AND MAYBE BETTER.
GET HER SOMETHING TO BITE ON. THIS IS GOING TO HURT.
STEVIE? IS THAT YOU?
WHO'S--?
SOMEONE SHE USED TO KNOW.
GRRRRAAAHHHHHH!

REGENERATION.
YOU'RE THE STARFISH.
ACTUALLY, I'M WILL. BUT YEAH, THAT WAS WHAT THE HOST CALLED ME, BECAUSE I CAN HEAL AND EVEN REGENERATE LIMBS, WITH ENOUGH TIME.
THE LIVING BLADE IS LOOKING FOR YOU.
UH. IS THAT A PERSON?
YES. IT'S THE MAN WHO DID THIS TO ME. I ASSUME HE WANTS YOU FOR WHAT YOU CAN DO, SO YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE. NOW.
CRAIG, TAKE WILL BACK TO THE WEB, I KNOW YOU'RE CLEVER ENOUGH TO KNOW HOW TO GET BACK IN.
IT'S THE SAFEST PLACE WE CAN MANAGE FOR NOW.
OF COURSE. BUT, BEFORE WE GO...
...I MEAN, I KNOW YOU'VE GOT *A LOT* ON YOUR PLATE RIGHT NOW, BUT I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING YOU NEED TO SEE...

THE ROOF.
PING
AH, DAMMIT. NOT THE *SOLDIER BOY*. THERE'S NO REASONING WITH THAT ONE.
STOP HIM! IF YOU STOP HIM AND LIVE, I PROMISE YOU RICHES BEYOND YOUR WILDEST DREAMS!
I DON'T KNOW, LADY, I DREAM PRETTY WILD.
BLAM
NO, YOU DON'T.
SHUT UP, TAD.
PING
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! START IT UP!
HNNG!
KR-PING
BLAM

KRAK
GAH!
BLAM
CRUNCCHH
≈GROAN≈
BLAM
DAMMIT!
ARGGH!
THWNCKR
KRRK
WHAM
BLAM
PING
KRRRCHHK
YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!

DON'T. SHE'S NOT WORTH IT, TAD.
ARE YOU INSANE, WHAT ARE YOU--
HRRRKK--
HEY!
STAY OUT OF--
--THIS, TIN SOLDIER, WE HAVE JUSTICE--
--TO DELIVER.
ENJOY--
--HELL.
NO, WAIT--
AIIIIIEEEEEEEE!
YOUR GIRL IS ALIVE, THOUGH WE HEARD--
--SHE LOST AN ARM.

WARNING
I FOUND HIM WHEN I WAS RELEASING THE OTHERS' CAGES AND COLLARS.
FROM THE NOTES, IT LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE EXPERIMENTING ON HIM FOR A WHILE. PRETTY GROSS STUFF. FROM WHAT'S HERE, IT LOOKS LIKE HIS BLOOD... WELL, HIS *BLOOD* WAS WHAT CREATED THE SUPER-POWERED OLIO.
...APOGEE.
THIS IS WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT.
THIS WAS HIS GREAT FEAR.
THAT OTHERS WOULD DISCOVER HIS SECRET AND USE HIM AS A LAB RAT...HARVEST HIS BLOOD. DO GOD-KNOWS-WHAT WITH IT. NOTHING GOOD.
SEEMS LIKE THE WRONG TIME TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO."
I APPRECIATE THAT YOU'VE MAINTAINED YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR THROUGH WHAT I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HAS BEEN A NIGHTMARE. BUT DON'T THINK THIS EXCUSES WHAT YOU DID, VOSS. A LOT OF INNOCENT PEOPLE DIED.
BUT THIS ISN'T RIGHT EITHER.

NAT, I KNOW YOU'RE HAVING A MOMENT HERE, BUT WE STILL HAVE LOOSE ENDS--SOME VERY DANGEROUS ONES--NOT TO MENTION WE HAVEN'T FOUND ALL OUR PEOPLE YET AND THE BUILDING IS POSSIBLY ON FIRE.
YES...OF COURSE.
THERE ARE NO EASY CHOICES TODAY.
I HOPE THIS IS NOT ONE I WILL COME TO REGRET.
THUNK
FRZZZZZKKKKT
TH-THANK YOU.
THIS IS A ONE-TIME PASS, VOSS. I FIND OUT YOU'RE USING YOUR POWERS FOR ILL AGAIN, YOU'RE DONE. AND BE ASSURED, I *WILL* KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
YOU SHOULD MOVE FAST--THIS AREA IS GOING TO BE ASH IN A MOMENT.
AS SOON AS HE'S CLEAR OF THE ROOM, BLOW IT. I DON'T WANT ANY OF THAT BLOOD FALLING INTO ANYONE'S HANDS.
GOOD IDEA.
CRAIG, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
YES. THE WEB. GOING NOW.

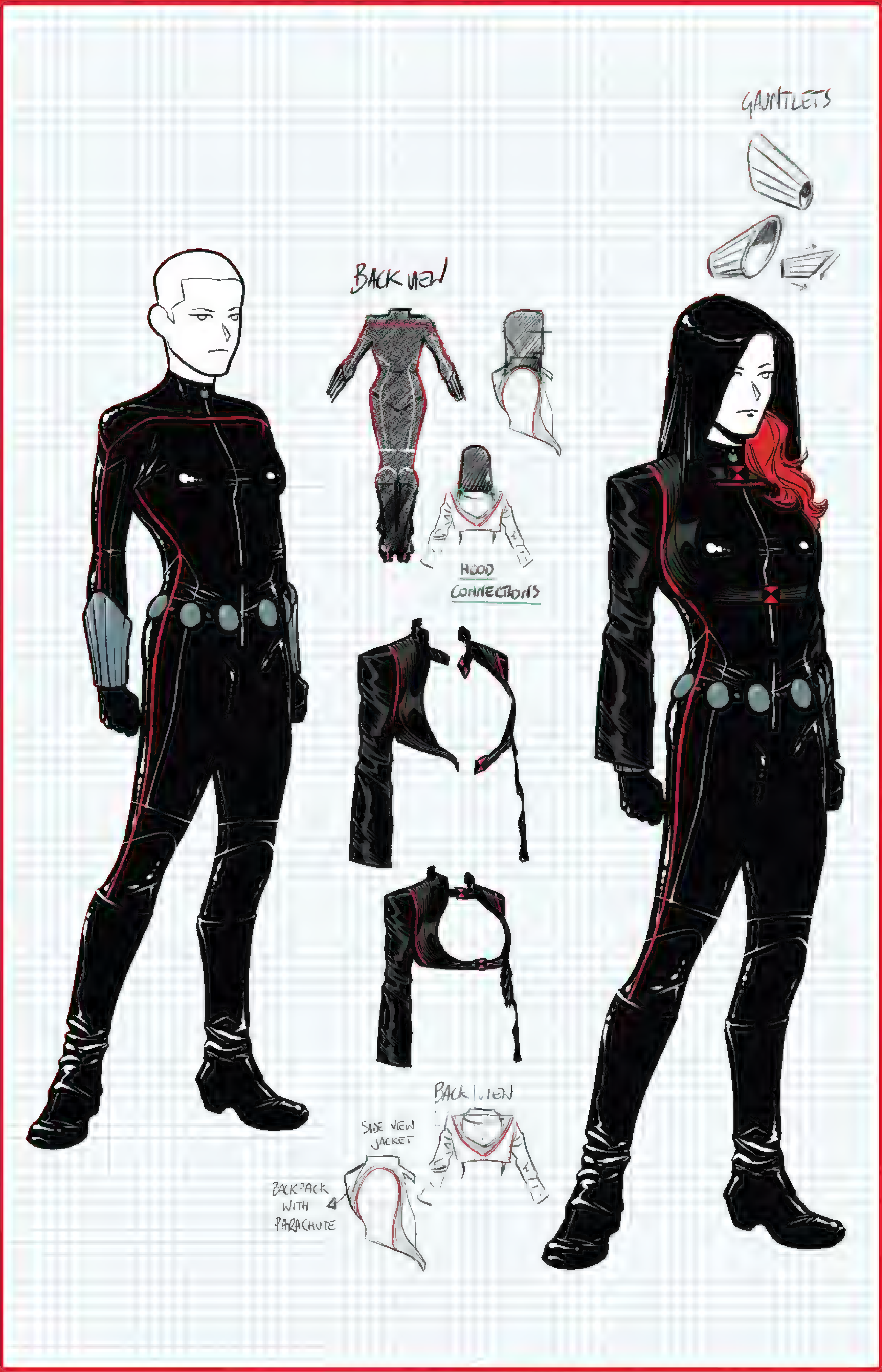
AIIIIEEEEEE!
BOOM
YELENA.
бесполезный маленький панк.
ты не наташа романова.
FZZZZ
KKRKT
YOUR ARM... *YOU* HAVE MY STARFISH.

I HAVE NOTHING, BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE NOT COMMODITIES TO BE BOUGHT, SOLD, AND TRADED.
SOMETHING I THOUGHT YOU UNDERSTOOD, GIVEN OUR LAST ENCOUNTER.
ARGGHHH!
GIVE HER TO ME! I NEED HER!
SHNNG
INTERESTING. HE KNOWS LITTLE ABOUT WHAT HE SEEKS. LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY.
SLICE
I CANNOT. SHE IS NOT MINE TO GIVE.
CLANG
I WONDER IF SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH *HIM* OR SOMEONE HE LOVES.

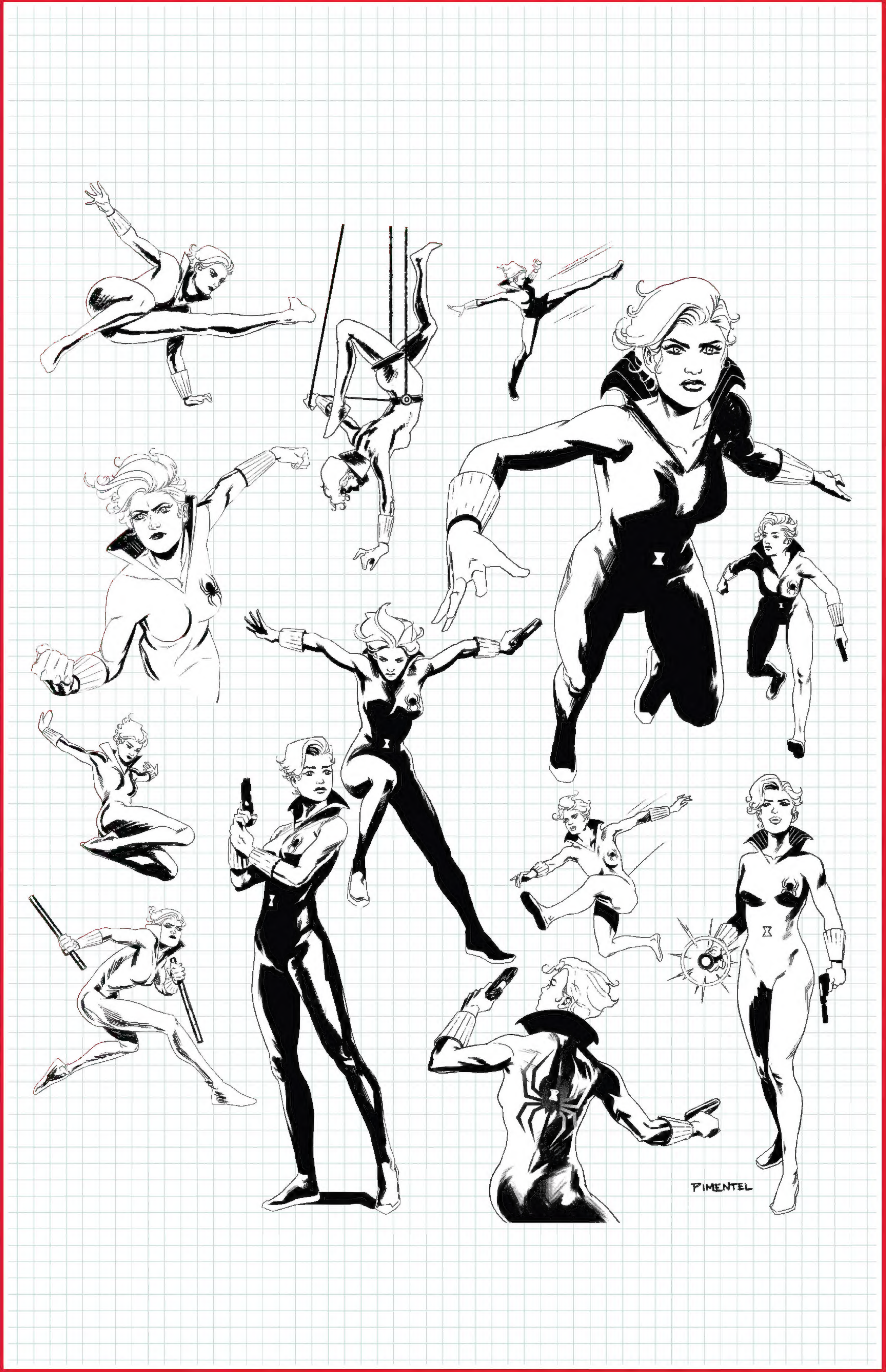
YOUR HONOR SPARED MY LIFE ONCE BEFORE, AND I DO THE SAME FOR YOU NOW.
IT IS NOT *YOUR* DECISION TO SPARE *MY* LIFE.
I THINK IT IS. YOU'VE BEEN HALF BLOWN UP AND ALREADY LOST WHAT YOU CAME HERE FOR.
PLUS, MY BRAND-NEW ARM ISN'T EVEN TIRED.
OH YEAH. AND *THAT.*
I HAVE A LOT MORE *FRIENDS* NOW THAN I DID IN THE OLD DAYS.
OF THAT, I'M CERTAIN.
THIS ISN'T OVER, WIDOW.

DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?
I ONLY EVER TOLD YOU WHAT HAPPENED ALL THOSE YEARS AGO WITH THE LIVING BLADE. BUT...IT'S HAUNTED ME.
I ALWAYS WORRY ABOUT YOU, BUT ONLY A LITTLE BIT, BECAUSE WELL, YOU'RE...*YOU.*
BUT TONIGHT, WHEN I HEARD HIS NAME...I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE IT, NAT.
I KNOW. I THOUGHT SO TOO. BUT WE MADE IT.
BUT NAT, IF THAT *HAD* BEEN IT--
BUT IT WASN'T.
BECAUSE WE ALWAYS COME BACK TO ONE ANOTHER. ALWAYS.
WAIT. WHY DID I GET ALL OF THE SHEEP OUT OF THE BUILDING IF IT IS FINE?!
THE TWINS PUSHED THE HOST OFF THE ROOF BEFORE SHE ACTIVATED THE SELF-DESTRUCT. I THINK WE'RE PROBABLY IN THE CLEAR.
SOOOOO... DID ANYONE ELSE GET TO EAT THE FANCY FOOD?
NO.

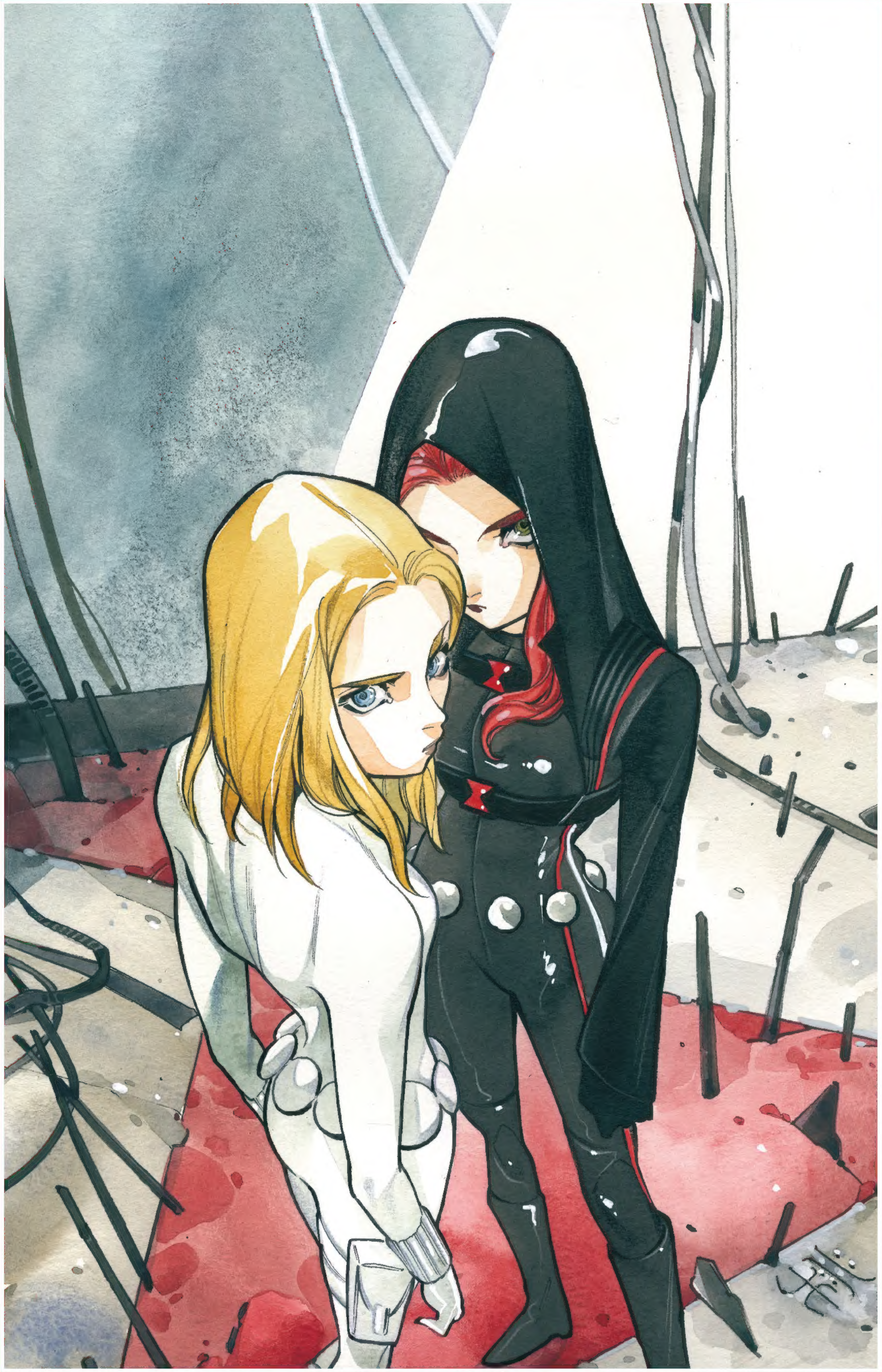
AT LEAST I *DID* GET TO SHOOT AT CIVILIANS.
OH, THAT'S A *PLUS?*
DEFINITELY.
HEY--DON'T DRINK IT ALL, MAN. C'MON.
I SUPPOSE IN SOME WAYS, I'LL NEVER STOP GRIEVING THEM--STEVIE AND JAMES, A LIFE I CANNOT HAVE--AND IT'S FOOLISH OF ME TO KEEP EXPECTING THAT MOMENT, THAT FEELING OF... *RELIEF*... TO COME.
BUT THIS IS GOOD TOO.
THIS IS BEAUTIFUL.
IT WILL DO.
THE END.


GAUNTLETS
BACK VIEW
HOOD CONNECTIONS
BACK VIEW
SIDE VIEW JACKET
BACKPACK WITH PARACHUTE

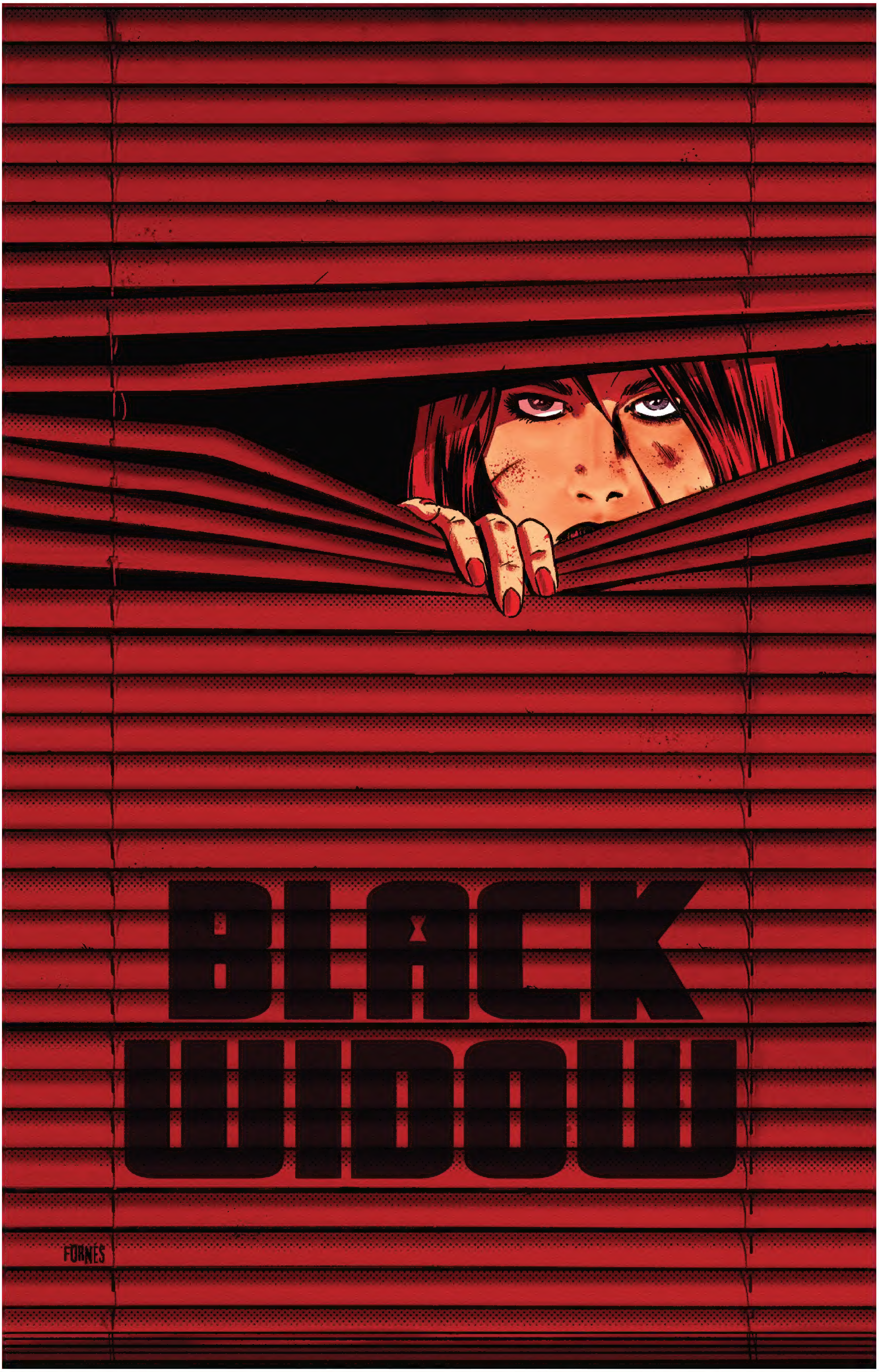
#6 DESIGN VARIANT BY **ELENA CASAGRANDE**



#13 DESIGN VARIANT BY **RAFAEL PIMENTEL**

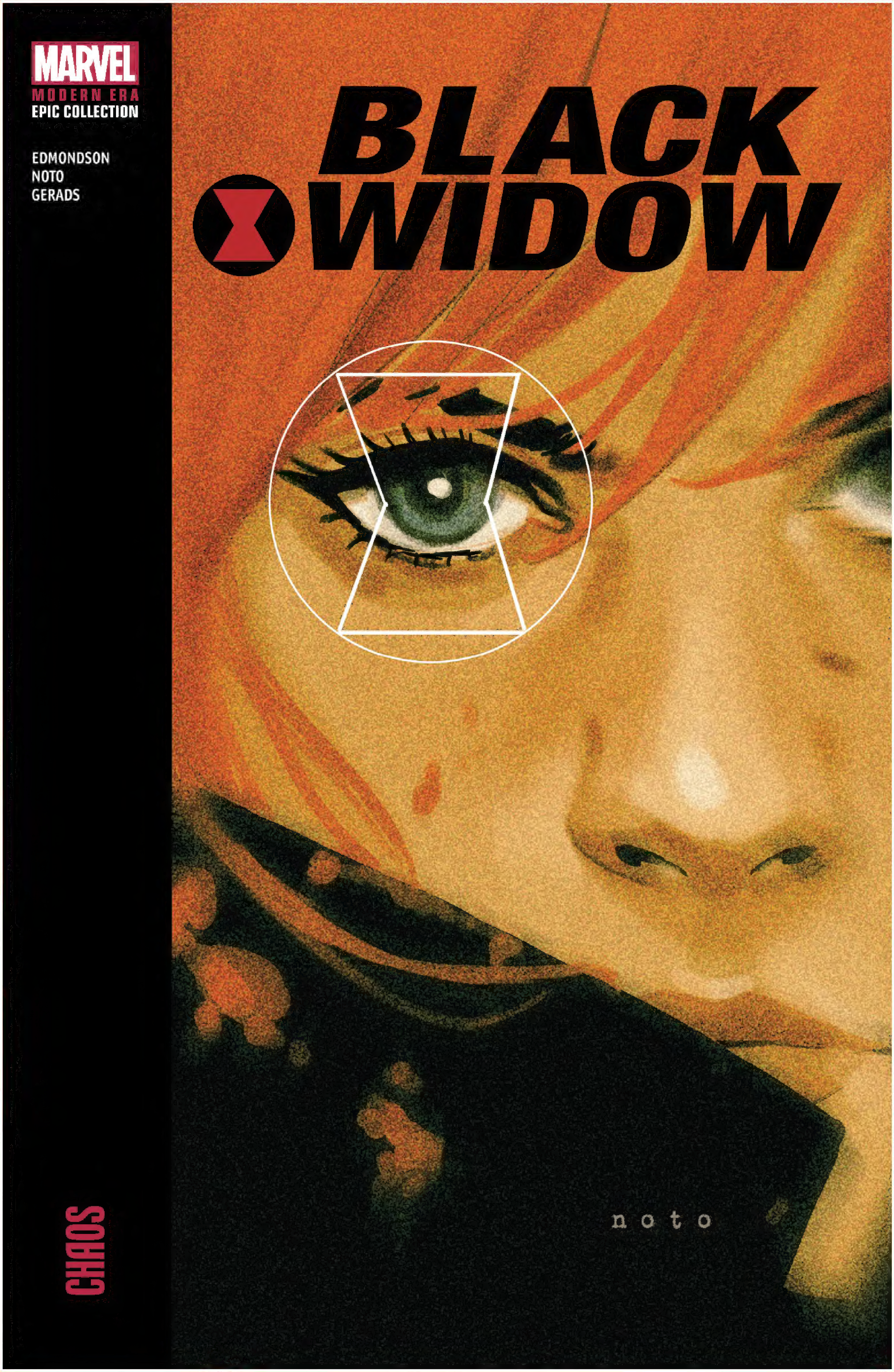


#15 VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**


BLACK WIDOW
FORNÉS

#15 VARIANT BY **JORGE FORNÉS**

MARVEL COLLECTED EDITIONS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